

# Filipino Martial Arts



**The Core Basics, Structure & Essentials**

Prof. Dan Anderson  
Grand Master MA-80 Arnis System

# Filipino Martial Arts

Core Basics, Structure & Essentials



Prof. Dan Anderson

Grand Master MA-80 Arnis System



# **Filipino Martial Arts - Core Basics, Structure & Essentials**

Copyright (C) 2009 Dan Anderson

All rights reserved. No part of the contents of this book  
may be reproduced in any form or by any means  
without the written permission of the publisher.

All rights reserved under International and  
Pan-American Copyright conventions.  
Published in the United States by DAMA Books & Videos

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES

First Edition September 2009

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My heartfelt thanks go out to several individuals who have helped me make this book a reality:

**Mark Wiley** - noted author and martial artist, Mark was the one who really lit the fire under me in bringing this book to fruition. His enthusiasm upon reading the first draft of the manuscript led me to expanding this book beyond what I had planned. I went to Philadelphia to help him shoot his own book and in our spare time, we shot the first section of this book. We spent a lot of time discussing and training Filipino Martial Arts and we got along like old training partners. An extra surprise was his introducing me to an aspect of Filipino Martial Arts that I had not seen before and now I add him to the list of martial artist who have influenced me. Thanks, Mark.

**Tom Corsin** - Tom is my senior black belt in my school, both in karate and arnis. Tom is usually my photo partner but this time he was mainly behind the camera. Thanks, Tom, for all you do.

**Susan Spencer** - Susan is my lead female student and her experience in films made her the perfect partner for this book. We shot the book using a motor drive. This way we could catch the techniques in action instead of static poses.

**Bram Frank, Brian Zawilinski & Bob Quinn** - My little brothers in FMA are always behind me and I appreciate the fellowship. Words don't really say it.

**Cristino Vasquez, Rene Tongson and Dieter Knuttel** - My foreign brothers are equally appreciated for their support and fellowship over the years.

**Remy Presas & Ted Buot** - My direct teachers in FMA. Without your generosity I would still be practicing half an art.

**Barry McConnell & Kimala Roosa** - My Florida students who have to be the most savage proofreaders yet. Their eagle eyes and Barry's editorial suggestions were key to finalizing this book. Thanks!

**Marie, Alexandria & Amanda** (wife and kids) - My thanks to all three of you for taking on the grandchildren while I snuck off to write this book. I would still be writing this book if I didn't have the amount of concentrated time I had over Christmas.

**This book is dedicated to John Bryant.**

I met John back in 1985 at a Modern Arnis training camp in Olympia, Washington. He was one of the first, if not the first person, to introduce Modern Arnis to the East Coast. He invited me out to Buffalo to teach for a week. While I was there I got to know him and introduced him to Scientology. I had been a member since 1982. Time passed and we fell out of touch. About a year ago he tagged with me and we picked up right where we left off. I found out about two weeks prior to writing this that he has been battling cancer for a while. What is so impressive about John is that I specifically picked the word *'battling'*. Rather than doing a 'lie down dog' or having a fatalistic attitude, he is on full speed attack. He is approaching his illness like a true martial artist. The amount of research he has done on cancer and his approach to handling it would have made Sun Tzu proud. All I can add is the title to a tune by Miles Davis that fits him to a 'T' - *'Go Ahead, John'*.

# FOREWARD

Dr. Mark V. Wiley

There are few people in the world of martial arts who do more than one art well. And there are even fewer who truly master two arts in their lifetime. Dan Anderson is a person who not only does two arts well but has mastered them both.

We all know Dan Anderson from his infamous karate days in the early 1980s. He was among the best and top-placing tournament fighters on the open circuit. And even if you did not live on the West Coast, where many of his fights were won, you knew him through the magazines and his book, *American Freestyle Karate*. This book was the first to teach how to fight with karate and win within the rules of the day. It showed combinations, set-ups and was filled with strategies and principles for winning. It was an instant classic on the topic.

Why was the book so great? Because the man who wrote it transcends boundaries. Dan came from a Korean arts background in Kong Soo Do, yet he studied methods from other styles and changed and adapted his own into a well-rounded empty-hand fighting art. This made him hard to out think and score on. Dan's Arnis is no different.

Interestingly, when Dan Anderson and I first talked on the phone (a mere 22 years after first meeting), we did not dwell on histories or personalities in the Filipino arts. On the contrary, we immediately connected into a deep discussion on fighting principles, training methods and strategies. My own background in the Filipino arts is quite extensive, but as far as I knew Dan's was limited to Modern Arnis, which is one of the more basic Filipino weapon arts. This alone made our conversation interesting because there was nothing simplistic about Dan's analysis of the art.

Yes, Dan is a master of Modern Arnis under Remy Presas and yes, Dan studied Balintawak Arnis under Ted Buot. Yet Dan's own art, which he calls MA-80, is more comprehensive in training and theory than its predecessors. So where did the other information come from? Well... Dan. You see the Dan Anderson of Arnis is the same as the Dan Anderson of Karate. He brings to his study and practice of Arnis the same framework of strategies, principles and applications for use in sparring as he did with his empty-hand art. Dan does as Dan thinks and perceives, regardless of style. He transcends boundaries, and this quality alone makes him unique in the martial arts.

What I found even more interesting during our first and subsequent thousand phone conversations, is Dan's need to share his knowledge with the world. He has written a dozen books on Arnis. All self-published so he could keep total control over the material and presentation of his work. I bought Dan's Arnis books, and you should, too, as they are filled with thousands of photos and words on this fantastic fighting art. He has written books on the basics, on disarming, on locking, on learning and... with this book, on the core basics, structure and essentials of Modern Arnis 80.



The book is so in depth that to highlight it would takes pages. It is best to just look at the Table of Contents and begin drooling at the offerings. Structure, timing, fighting drills, wrist positions, recoil options... who teaches this stuff? Dan Anderson does!

For the beginner, this book is essential reading. For the long-time practitioner, it is a workbook to be torn apart, analyzed and its material practiced. For the master, it is a book worth reading slowly, to see how information you currently know may be better explained, and to find perhaps better ways of doing things you have done for decades. And knowing what I know about the Filipino arts, I will venture to say that regardless of your rank and years in the art, there will be a great deal of information within these pages that you did not heretofore know or even consider.

*Filipino Martial Arts: Core Basics, Structure and Essentials* is destined to become a classic in Arnis just as *American Freestyle Karate* became a classic in Karate. Dan is obviously a martial arts professor and a teacher's teacher. He is also very funny and easy to learn from and get along with. If you have the opportunity, go and train directly with Dan. If not, then this book should be at your side.

Dr. Mark V. Wiley  
Founder, Integrated Eskrima  
Makati City, Philippines 2009

*Mark V. Wiley is a noted author on Filipino Martial Arts. Among his published works are:*

- *Eskrima Disarms* (Unique Publications, 2009) In Press
- *Outwitting Headaches* (Lyons Press, 2004)
- *Filipino Fighting Arts: Theory and Practice* (Unique Publications, 2001)
- *The Secrets of Phoenix-Eye Fist Kung Fu* (Tuttle Publishing, 2001)
- *Arnis: History and Development of Filipino Martial Arts* (Tuttle Publishing, 2001)
- *Martial Arts Talk* (Tuttle Publishing, 2000)
- *The Secrets of Cabaes Serrada Escrima* (Tuttle Publishing, 2000)
- *Qigong for Health and Well-Being* (Journey Editions, 1999)
- *Filipino Martial Culture* (Tuttle Publishing, 1998)
- *Filipino Martial Arts: Cabaes Serrada Escrima* (Tuttle Publishing, 1994)

# FOREWARD

## Grand Master Bram Frank

### Dan Anderson: An Instructor's Instructor

I first began to know Dan as “*Super Dan*” the karate fighter who had great timing, distancing and an overall infectious attitude towards martial arts. This fighting ability and attitude took him to the being rated consistently for many years as a TOP TEN fighter and even the Number #1 ranking. That’s actually NOT what got me to pay attention to Dan. Yes, Dan got me involved with Modern Arnis, because if it wasn’t for Dan I’d probably have trained FMA with someone else rather than Professor Remy Presas. What got me to pay real attention to Dan was his book from Unique Publications titled *American Freestyle Karate: a Guide to Sparring*.

Dan’s opening statement in his own forward is: *‘This is the one I searched for as a 14 year old white belt in 1966. My own instructor was teaching me the basics of karate but I hungered for a book that could teach me all sorts of “fancy moves” and “tricks” in sparring.....There have been several books that cover certain techniques for sparring that have been written recently, but they fail to satisfy my original needs...Robert Smith wrote in a review of a martial arts book, “give me the principles and I’ll devise my own tactics.” That is what I was looking for. Give me an idea and I’ll see if it works for me and under what circumstance. That’s what this book is all about.*

I hungrily ate up Dan’s book. Dan had the same hunger that I did so to appease that hunger he was forced to explore martial arts and write his own book. He asked the same questions, and sought out underlying principles and their conceptual use. He wanted to know the why and better still he wanted to make sure others reading his book UNDERSTOOD what he had found out. What Dan ended up writing wasn’t a book on sparring but on understanding the underlying principles of all martial arts and it was what I consider to be an *Instructors Handbook* on being a better practitioner but a better instructor as well. It’s what I had been looking for myself all those years and I still look for in martial arts books. Dan is, by far, the only person I know in his writing of martial arts books that wants to teach you ‘how to fish’, not impress you with big fish he’s caught nor fish for you.

When Dan came to stay at my home in Miami Beach about 15 or so years ago, he pulled his book off the shelf from my martial arts library and he had a grin on his face. He was so impressed with condition of his book he had to write in mine: *‘Bram it’s nice to see a beat up copy of my book around. That means it’s been read and read again many times. That’s good! We are off to a good start of what is going to be a good relationship.’*

Well, it has been a very good relationship. What I like best is put us in a room and everything else disappears for we discuss principles and concepts of motion, use, angles and translations of the arts from the sun rising till the sun rises again. This desire to explore has never left either of us and that’s what I’m getting at.





This book of Dan's in your hand or ANY book written by Dan is a treasure chest of explorations and ways for you the reader to take part in those explorations. It's meant to be used to be read and discussed!

No one reads a Dan Anderson book and comes away empty or lost or saying well that almost did it, Dan's books take you there and demand that you keep using them, refer to them and let them be part of your life! They truly are users guides and you might want to get 2 copies of each book so you can mark up, spindle and reread one copy and keep a nice copy on your shelf (unless Dan actually comes to your home, then show him the beat up USED copy!). Like I said before, what you have in your hands is the type of book I always looked for and is truly a user's guide!

Let me say it's an honor and a privilege to write a forward for Dan's book.  
Enjoy the book. I did. It's a keeper as always!

Bram Frank  
Founder / Director CSSD/SS Tactical Systems  
Grandmaster CSSD Conceptual /Combat Arnis

*Among his many recognitions, Bram Frank was the 2007 inductee into the Black Belt magazine Hall of Fame in 2007 as the Weapons Instructor of the Year.*

# FILIPINO MARTIAL ARTS

## The Core Basics, Structure & Essentials

### Author's Forward

How this book came about was a product of several events. I taught at a Modern Arnis camp in Atlanta, Georgia in the summer of 2008. I decided to teach for the first time outside of my own school, the fundamental principles of MA-80 (Modern Arnis 80 - my system of arnis. See appendix for more details). I did this in a series of five classes, videoed them and took notes. Fast forward about 6 months and we come to where I was snowed in at my house for five days over Christmas and I was stuck in the house (with five grandchildren). My wife, Marie, and two of my daughters, Alexandria and Amanda, took care of them so I was able to hole myself up in the computer room and compile my notes into a cohesive whole and the first rough draft of this book was written.

A couple of months later I got a written comm from Mark Wiley, a 'friend request' on the Internet site Facebook. I wrote him and said although we hadn't met I was impressed by his books and to keep up the good work. He wrote back and said that we *had* met back in 1987 (22 years prior) in Philadelphia at a karate seminar I taught. He also said he thought my first book on karate, *American Freestyle Karate*, was a classic. My first thought was 'Wow. *This guy is well known in the FMA circles, has written several very good books on the subject and he's a fan of mine?*' I got back in comm with him and I ended up sending him the rough manuscript of this book and asked, 'Where are the holes in this?'

What he sent back was brimming with enthusiasm. We hit it off in the very first phone call we had. We found out that although we had very different backgrounds in FMA, we both approached the art from the same direction – a principle and conceptual base as opposed to a technique oriented viewpoint. I kept working on it until it became what you have in your hands today.



*Mark Wiley & Dan Anderson*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	The Core Basics, Structure & Essentials	1
2.	Purpose Of This Book	4
3.	Monitoring	7
4.	Timing	15
5.	Structure	21
6.	Alignment	35
7.	Structure In (During) Transition	63
8.	Alignment In (During) Transition	71
9.	Distancing	77
10.	Movement/Stasis	117
11.	Leveraging	133
12.	Integrated Body Action	171
13.	Ambidexterity	191
14.	Spontaneity	257
15.	The Flow	263
16.	Counter The Counter	271
17.	Epilogue	291
18.	Appendix A - The Development Of MA-80	293
19.	Appendix B - Core Basics Of MA-80	297
20.	Wrist Position In Striking	297
21.	Closeness Of Blocking	299
22.	Recoil Options	303
23.	Duelling & Combat Training	313

## FILIPINO MARTIAL ARTS

### The Core Basics, Structure & Essentials

Filipino Martial Arts go by many different names. You hear of arnis, escrima, pananandata, baston, kabaroan, kali and the like. Considering that The Philippines is an archipelagic nation made up of 7,107 islands with over 170 languages, it is not surprising that there are a number of different terms for what is essentially the same thing. Here one would have to apply Shakespeare's quote, *'A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.'* And so it goes with Filipino Martial Arts.

There are many different styles or systems of Filipino Martial Arts (FMA). You will have as many different styles or systems as you have families or groups training. So what makes a style? What makes a system? Mark Wiley, author of the book *'Filipino Martial Culture'*, delineates a style as a manner of applying a technique (such as an abanico – a method of using the wrist action to strike with the cane, much like fanning the air). He defines a system as a step-by-step curriculum that progresses from one point to the next. Mind you these are simplifications of what he wrote but they'll do for now. As there are only so many ways to move the human body, what makes a style or system are the emphasis points within it. Several examples are:

Balintawak Eskrima (Anciong bacon) - close quarters, setting up your opponent

Cabales Serrada Eskrima (Angel Cabales) - short stick, medium range, rapid strikes

Modern Arnis (Remy Presas) - capture and lock (tapi-tapi), grabbing/immobilizing the cane

Bahala Na Eskrima (Leo Giron) - long distance applications, blade orientation, 20 different styles of application

Original Filipino Tapado - long range, long stick, two-hand power system



Anciong  
Bacon



Angel Cabales



Remy Presas



Leo Giron



Tapado practitioners

Each system of FMA has its own distinctive flavor, its own 'stamp'. This is why Modern Arnis, Serrada Eskrima, Kalis Ilustrisimo players all look different even though they are, essentially, doing the same thing. Emphasis points are what make any style or system 'different.' It doesn't matter whether you are talking about Filipino or Japanese or Chinese arts or what have you. Emphasis points are the differences in the styles or systems. The training methods will be based around these emphasis points. An interesting point to interject here is that if you look at the history of arnis or escrima some 50+ years earlier, there weren't styles and systems around. There was who is the best local fighter or fighting family. There were several established self-defense or 'fencing' clubs but not styles or systems like there are today. These are products of adopting the Japanese belt system and rank hierarchy. Anyway, back to the main point. How do these emphasis points come about? From the system founder's experience and then modified by each successor. A good example would be Kalis Ilustrisimo The 'founder', Antonio Ilustrisimo (right photo) was a fighter and teacher but he taught in what is called in some groups, a 'circular' fashion.



He taught whatever he taught that day and it was up to the students to put it together in their own application. Yuli Romo and Tony Diego started putting the system together. Christopher Ricketts and Tony Diego a few years later started filming *Ilustrisimo* and formulating progressions and drills. Later, Romy Macapagal and Rey Galang joined as students and added their college-educated experience on presentation of the art. They wrote of how it would be frustrating to do this as they would ask their teacher to demonstrate (let's say) a counter to a strike, he would demonstrate one action. When asked to do it again he would do something else. They were cataloging and he was 'fighting.' He would apply what was appropriate for right at that exact moment.

Much of my hands on training has been under Remy Presas and Ted Buot so I'll refer to them quite a bit in this text. I learned from Grand Master Remy Presas in somewhat the same manner as described above. I believe GM Remy learned about teaching in a curriculum fashion from his days back in the Philippines teaching at the University of Negros Occidental. From my research I learned he taught that way (curriculum based) at his gym back home. When he came to the United States it became a different matter. GM Remy literally changed the martial arts seminar scene in the US. He had a unique approach which was instead of teaching only his art, he would find the connecting threads in Modern Arnis to the current karate/taekwondo scene and then teach what he would call, '*The Art Within Your Art*.' This was a brilliant marketing ploy and he literally made a very good living off of teaching seminars for the rest of his life.

At any seminar he would subdivide Modern Arnis into various parts and teach that part. Quite often using the cane would be a minor part of a seminar. I have used the term '*the confetti approach*' to his teaching. At times it was like he would shoot confetti up in the air (teach all sorts of different techniques, quite often unrelated) and whatever stuck to you, you took home. Over the many years he taught in the US he presented all the *subdivisions* but as he would never establish a home or base school, he never established a formalized curriculum. This was very frustrating to the typical American student as this is what we were used to. It became up to the senior students to really put it all together into some kind of cohesive whole. There are several organizations which have done so in the US, Germany and the Philippines. *Modern Arnis 80 (MA-80)* began as one such organization.

Below is an example of an evolution of a 'system' of FMA, from the Presas family art to Remy Presas' Modern Arnis. (Note: Remy Presas history primarily taken from an article in *Inside Kung Fu* magazine by Rick Mitchell) My own history is in the appendix.

*5 years old* - Remy begins to learn the *espada y daga* (sword and dagger) family system from his grandfather, Leon Presas. (Note: the Presas family system is very similar to others of Negros Occidental, like Herminio Binás and Ben Lima.)

*12 years old* - Remy and his cousin home. Remy connects up with Rodolfo Moncal and learns balintawak escrima for 2 years.

*14 years old* - Remy goes back home to Negros Occidental, finds out that balintawak helps him in duels. He leaves and goes back to Cebu and trains under Timoteo Maranga and then balintawak founder, Anciong Bacon for four years.

*1957* - GM Remy Presas opens a gym and teaches Modern Arnis. This is an amalgam of the family style, balintawak escrima and other influences he has picked up in his travels.

*1961* - GM Remy Presas begins to teach for the Bureau of Public & Private Schools in Negros Occidental.



1963 – GM Remy Presas teaches arnis, judo, karate and Greco-roman wrestling at the University of Negros Occidental Department of Criminology and Physical Education. *Note: here is where I suspect he got the idea to teach arnis in some form of curriculum fashion.*

1974 - GM Remy Presas writes his first book on Modern Arnis (Modern Arnis, Philippine Martial Art Stick Fighting).

1975 - GM Remy Presas leaves the Philippines and comes to reside in the USA.

1976 - GM Remy Presas writes his second and third books on Modern Arnis (The Practical Art Of Eskrima [English] and Makabagong Arnis De Mano [Tagalog]).

1981 - GM Remy Presas authors his fourth book on Modern Arnis (Modern Arnis, The Filipino Art Of Stick Fighting).

1982 – GM Remy Presas is inducted into the Black Belt magazine Hall of Fame as Instructor of the Year. In 1994 he is honored as Weapons Instructor of the Year.

1985 – 2000 - GM Remy Presas teams up with Prof. Wally Jay and later with George Dillman to form 'The Big Three' and infuses Modern Arnis with Small Circle Jiu-Jitsu techniques and some Ryukyu Kempo.



Remy Presas

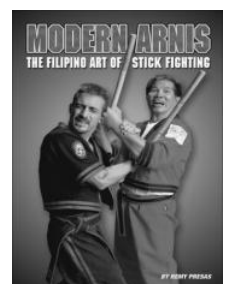
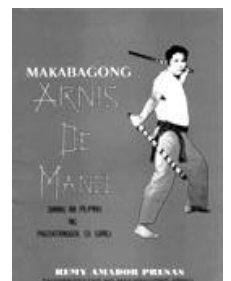
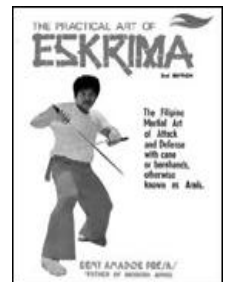
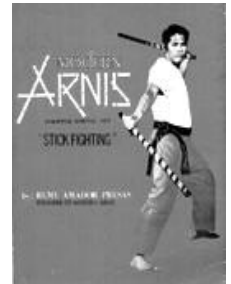
Wally Jay

George Dillman

2001 - GM Remy Presas passes away from cancer.

You can see from this timeline how GM Remy Presas began his training in the family art trained by his grandfather, learned other arts along the way, formed his own interpretation of arnis, names it Modern Arnis and taught that.

I meet up with him with 14 years previous experience in martial arts (including being a 4 time national karate champion), learn his art and meld it with my own research and studies and so it develops and evolves into my own personal expression of the art (Note: at this point this means my own expression of Filipino Martial Arts). I listed my own time line in the chapter *The Development Of MA-80* (see appendix). And so it goes. I'm sure my top students will do the same. This is the natural evolution of any martial art and is not limited to the FMA.



## PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

This book is a delineation of the core basics, structure and essentials of Filipino Martial Arts. How I teach MA-80 deals with the core essentials of FMA. The purpose of this book is to aid the western student to exceed their own expectations in the development of their skills.

My premise is this: *every* grand master started out as a beginner. Not one of them was born exceptionally skilled and versed in the combat arts. Each one of them made the same stupid mistakes we all did as white belts. This is something that is overlooked by students. Their teacher made the same mistakes they did. Every grand master eventually ended up being wonderfully skilled and so on. Many of them were horrible teachers, in a scientific sense. The fascinating thing is that since principles are universal, they all applied the same principles. Each one had his or her own way of applying them, hence individual styles.

Remember when I said my karate teacher really stressed teaching in a formal curriculum. He was also a thinker. He worked out *why* as well as *how*. I later applied that in my karate and arnis training. I especially began to work this viewpoint regarding arnis in 1987. GM Remy was going through a period of poor health and many of us wondered how long he was going to live. At that time I stopped *listening* to him and really began to *watch* what he did and *feel* how he did it. This is where I began to discern the principles he was operating on. He never delineated much in the way of the principles he was operating on. He taught in the confetti approach. By the time he recovered I was well on my way to understanding FMA to the core.

This is what this book is about. This book transcends styles. This book deals in principles that can be applied to ANY system of FMA. This book is *for you*. This book is for you to pick and choose what you want to take from it to further *your* own art. I look at this book as a western method of teaching a Filipino Martial Art. My personal belief is that you, anyone can become as skilled as your grand master if you know and train the principles of your art. ANYONE. This is upsetting to some but again I stress that every grand master was once a white belt and came up the hard way – through hard work and desire. This is what



*The author in Buffalo, New York 1986*

This book is laid differently than in most martial arts books. Rather than showing basic moves, sequences and so forth, the main body of the book goes principles - the core basics, structure and essentials. These principles are the same no matter which art or kind of art you study. They apply to karate, judo, ju-jitsu, taekwondo, kenpo, kung fu, mixed martial arts, what have you. Only the techniques differ. At the end of the book I add two appendices. The first appendix deals with the evolution of MA-80, my own personal art. In the second appendix I delineate some of the key characteristic points/core basics to MA-80.

The main body of the book covers:

- Monitoring
- Timing
- Structure
- Alignment
- Structure In (during) Transition
- Alignment In (during) Transition
- Distancing
- Movement/Stasis
- Leveraging
- Integrated Body Action
- Ambidexterity
- Spontaneity
- The Flow
- Counter The Counter

Appendix A covers:

- The Development of MA-80

Appendix B covers:

- Wrist Position
- Closeness of Blocking
- Recoil Options
- Combat Training (MA-80) viewpoint

One of the things you will discover as you go through this manual is that the data in each chapter are very interrelated. Very few principles exist solely on their own when you get into application. They can, however, be explained one by one so that you can get a better grasp of each one. You will notice that my explanations are quite simple and to the point. I do this so they will be easily grasped by you, the reader. I have attempted to insert enough examples so that you will get the principle, duplicate the principle and in the long run, create your own action off of the principle.

As an added bonus I have included two DVDs demonstrating many of the principles, drills and applications photographed in the chapters. This is so that you will have the benefit of seeing the motion and flow of the actions as well as the descriptions in the text. The photos for chapters 1-7 one were shot in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with Mark Wiley and Ian Fusco as my partners. The rest of the book and the entirety of the DVD video footage was shot at my school in Gresham, Oregon.

## MONITORING

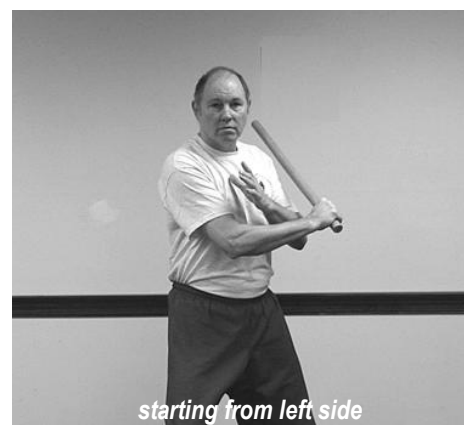
Monitoring comes from the word, monitor – definition: *to view with a purpose*. This is my term for 'attack recognition'. Any attack has three segments to it: 1) point of origin, 2) travel route and 3) destination point or point of impact. Knowing what your opponent can do from any point of origin is the key here.



Simply speaking, a strike can only come at you from several points of origin. It can come at you from your opponent's left side, right side, from above, from below or straight in from the center.

This is very simple when you look at it. All the various methods of striking will come from one of those five points of origin. With this simplification one begins to recognize *motion*. This is important as in a fight, you don't have time to think, ponder and mull over what your opponent is hitting you with.

Basically all you need to see is point of origin and the kind of weapon (impact weapon or edged weapon) and go. Training against all kinds of weapons will give you the skills necessary to handle them but the important thing is A) spotting point of origin and B) knowing what kind of motion is available from that point of origin. The following photos will show you what I mean.



When you are monitoring your opponent, you aren't watching for recognition of what technique is coming. That is too late. What you are looking for is a telegraph of the technique. You are looking for the *beginning* of the technique. You are looking at the first *four inches of movement* which tells you what is coming. This is crucial. If you are looking to recognize what the move ends up being, you will find out by being hit with it. Spotting the telegraphing action of the technique is the key.

How I do it is this: I watch my opponent's upper body in conjunction with what I call the *Positional Center Line*. If you use both sides of your opponent's body as outer boundaries and mentally draw a line down the middle of those boundaries, you have the Positional Center Line. It will not matter if your opponent is facing forwards, angled, or sideways to you. He will have a Positional Center Line. How his hands (weapon hand and check hand) move in relation to that line gives you the information you need to read his attacks.





Simply speaking, if his hand crosses the center line he is set up to throw a backhand sort of strike. If his hand moves away from the center line his strike will come at you in a forehand curve. If it just goes at you from its position, it's coming straight at you.

In defensive angling you monitor a different part of the body, the shoulders.

The whole idea is that your opponent can't move at all without moving his shoulders so when he moves his shoulders, you angle off of his line of attack. The trick here is to angle - on your recognition of motion, not on recognition of commitment. This is where most people make the mistake. They wait until they are sure that their opponent is coming and then they get hit. Even if you angle and your opponent doesn't come in, you are still off of his line of attack. He will still have to reposition himself in order to set up again.



*If neither player recognizes telegraph of motion, each will hit the other easily. If you recognize their motion, you can reposition yourself.*



*In the above photos (1-4) you can see how recognition of telegraph will allow you to counter strike with your evasive step.*

*Common telegraphing mistake #1 - Pulling back your shoulders prior to launching forward.*



*Common telegraphing mistake #2 - Stepping before your strike.*



*Common telegraphing mistake #3 - Dropping your knees before you step.*



*Common telegraphing mistake #4 - Winding up on your strike.*



You see from the preceding photos that I am looking for some sort of tell tale movement of his shoulders. People will do all sorts of minute telegraphing motions with their shoulders. Some rest back on the back leg, pulling the shoulders back. Some will lean forward before they move, making their shoulders come forward slightly. A sideward shift of the shoulders could telegraph a certain kind of strike coming at you. Quite often the movement will be no more than an inch. If you are watching closely and have trained yourself to spot movement, even an inch is enough to forewarn you. No matter how your opponent telegraphs his strike, it will show up in the shoulder movement.

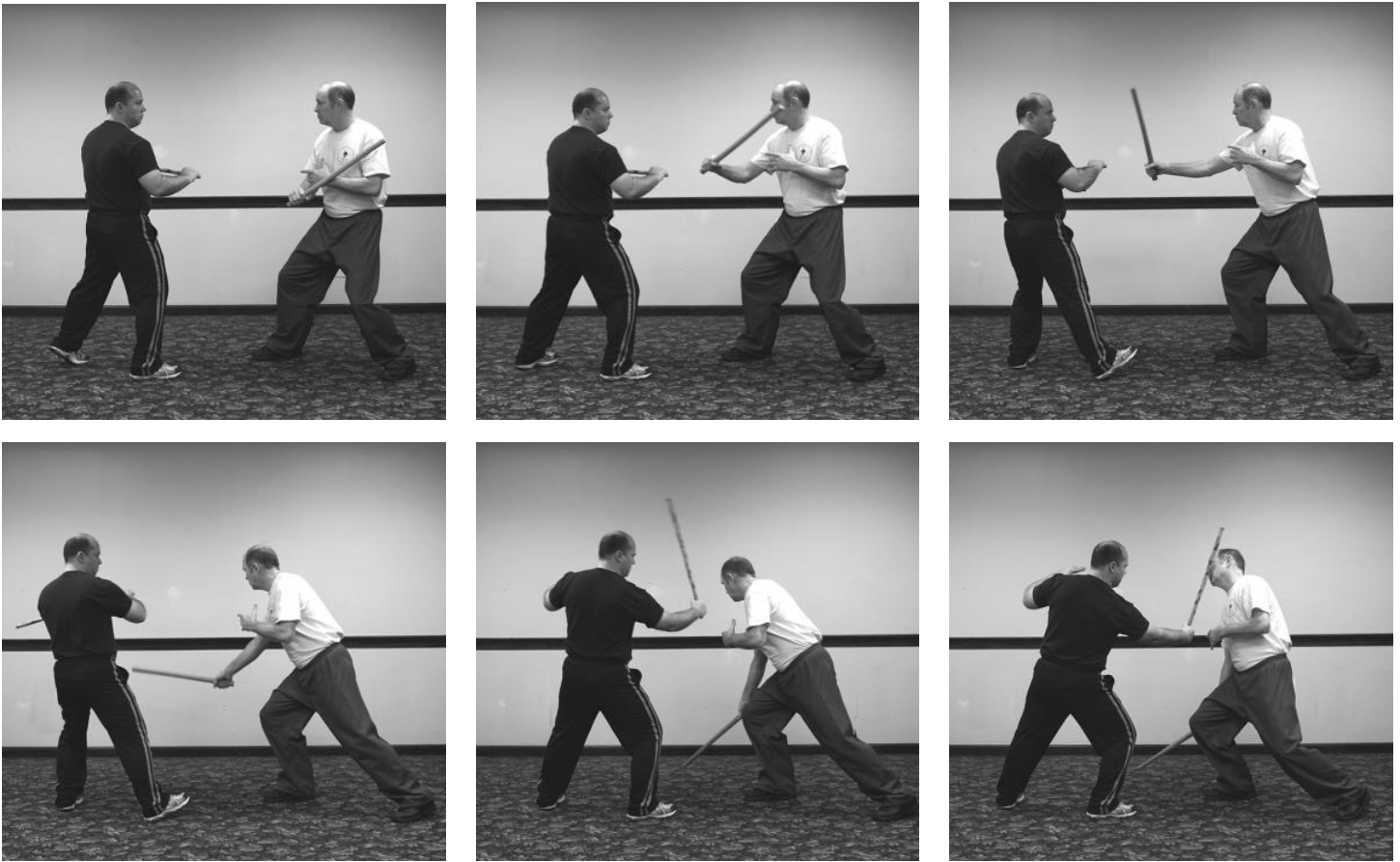
What is the connection of monitoring to reaction time? I hear a lot about this term, 'reaction time,' and I want to go over it in a different light. To me, reaction time is a myth. Let's look at it. This is my definition of reaction time:

**REACTION TIME IS THE TIME IT TAKES TO GO FROM UNPREPARED TO RESPONSE.**

Reaction time is usually how fast you react to any given thing. Here's the catch; to 'react' you have to be somewhat unaware of it or some part of it to begin with. Surprise enters into it. You are prodded into action by a stimulus. That is the fault in the thinking. For your reaction time to be off it has to be slower than you need it to be. Slow and fast are not mistakes in timing. Too early and too late are the mistakes in timing (more on this in the next chapter). Timing is based on observation (monitoring) and preparation (positioning). So, for one to have 'slow reaction time,' either observation is out or preparation is out or both are out. Somebody does a move. Your observation of it is late, even by a hair. You go, 'Oops.' You do the defense or counter move. You feel you have a slow 'reaction time.' The photos below show me nearly getting hit because I wasn't paying attention.



*If you concentrate too much on your strike you could miss your opponent's counter stroke and get hit before you can respond.*



Let me give you an actual example of how observation and preparation are the key points here to timing. I was having a student doing a timing drill. He was going to hit his partner when his partner stopped moving. The student was late and couldn't figure out why and I overheard the term 'reaction time.' I just supposed that this was being given as the reason. I pointed out that since the apparancy of time is the movement of things through a given space, I asked when did he launch? Keep in mind that when anybody stops there is a *beginning* of the stopping action, the actual slowing down and then the final halting. This may take 1/4 of a second but it will still go through these three distinct phases.

His answer was 'at the end of the stop.' My reply was that his partner is *done* stopping by that time and he will go on to something else. The realization came instantly. I gave a demonstration by having an Orange belt hit me at the beginning of my stop. I checked with my student later. The 'reaction time' had improved. What had occurred was observation became more acute and the preparation occurred sooner. He developed a *response time*. So, when you look at it, if you have slow 'reaction time,' you will never be able to fix it because that's not getting to the root of the matter. Get in your observation, be prepared, and you will see and be able to handle all sorts of things you never have before.

*Personal monitoring* is awareness of self, awareness of your own positioning at any given time. An easy way to look at this is how many times have you begun to strike and gotten hit by your opponent? You didn't know it at the time but when you fired the strike, you drew back your strike first. Or you keep getting hit on your cane hand because you don't see that your lead hand has a tendency to drift forward into his striking range. Or one of many mistakes you make but don't see yourself making.



Quite often a beginner will have too much attention on what he is doing, whether it is what he is going to do to his opponent or his anxiety on *'What the heck am I going to do now?'* This isn't personal monitoring but tunnel vision. To handle this, I teach to monitor your partner first and then to monitor yourself. To keep the pendulum from swinging too far the other way (monitoring him to only monitoring yourself), I'll tell my students to *'include your opponent in the equation.'*

The point I make here is that monitoring isn't only attack recognition. It is getting your awareness out over the entire situation so that you don't have any stuck attention on your opponent, and stuck attention on yourself and so forth. This is a fairly advanced stage of awareness when you are cognizant of your opponent and of yourself at the same time without being overly out of balance in one direction or another. This is what I mean. I don't claim it to be easy to start out with but with drilling and understanding of it, it can be done.



*Instruction in timing at the 50th Anniversary of the founding of Modern Arnis camp held in Germany. In this example I am teaching how one uses Monitoring to detect and counter your opponent's strike just as he moves.*

## TIMING

Timing is number two on my list. The first and principle key flaw in people's timing is that they have no working definition for it. I have asked many students and instructors at my seminars and have *never* gotten the same answer yet. Here is my working definition for it:

TIMING IS A DECISION OF WHEN.

When what? When anything. The mistakes made in timing have to do with the *when* of things, not the speed of them. The mistakes of timing are only two: *too early* or *too late*, not too fast or slow but too early or too late. Everyone knows timing in every day life, whether you are driving on the freeway, drinking a cup of coffee or going to work. Everyone knows timing. My best example has to do with eating dinner. As a kid you know that dinner time is 6:00 PM. If you get there too early, you have to help set the table. If you get there too late, you miss out on dinner and you end up doing the dishes for being late. You get there on time and dinner is served.

Offensive Timing - Look at this regarding your attacks. If your attack is too late, your opponent is out of the way or is now guarded or something like that. If you throw it too early then you miss the target and now have alerted them to your intentions. '*When is the right time to throw my attacks?*' The best time to throw an attack is when your opponent is not prepared for it, when he is out of position. So, when is that?

When your opponent squares off to spar/fight you, he is prepared to some degree. He expects some sort of resistance from you so, to that degree, he's aware of you. The trick is to get him to be less aware of you. You get him to change his position.

As he changes his position he will have at the very least some attention (consciously or subconsciously) on his change which means some of his attention comes off of you. Your trigger is that point of change. That is the time to attack. His change can be a change in stance, in his direction of movement, in a reaction to a fake, all sorts of places.

Here are a number of changes of your opponent that you can trigger your attack or defense off of. These are not, by any means, all of them.

1. during his stance change/weight shift
2. during his footwork
3. during his hand position change
4. during his advance
5. during his retreat
6. during his reaction to a fake
7. when he comes to a halt or stand still

That simplicity is the essence to offensive timing. Attack him when he is less or least ready for you. Again, I mention that the key mistakes in timing are *too soon* and *too late*.

Here are examples of offensive timing.



*During your opponent's stance change/weight shift.*



*During your opponent's change in footwork from one direction to the other.*



*During a hand position change (example from upright guard to a closed [serrada] position).*

Offensive timing continued...



Offensive timing continued...



### *The Hidden Mistake*

There is a hidden mistake in timing as well. This is preparation to move. The second principal flaw in timing has to do with preparation. I will teach the above drills in seminars and then ask the students, *'Who feels they are still having trouble with their timing?'* I will have whoever has trouble execute the timing drill again. I tell the others to watch closely and tell me what the first motion does. Hardly anyone ever spots the mistake. Invariably, one for one, the student who is having trouble with his timing *is bending his knees first* and then moving. In other words, he is wasting his split second *getting ready to move* instead of moving. When that was corrected there were no more timing problems.

One area regarding your timing you might look at is in coordinating your attack with your entry footwork. Too often an attack will come in out of synchronization with your footwork. You get there and haven't thrown it (too late) or you throw it too soon without having gotten there (too soon). You will need to time your attack so that you are hitting right when you get into range of the particular hit you're doing (strike #1, strike #2, etc.). Often you'll have to begin your attack mid range cross/mid step so that lands when you get there. The bottom photo sequence shows my strike starting too late and me getting hit for my troubles.



What is called *initial move* helps handle this. The way I teach the concept of initial move is to throw your attack or fake just as the lead foot moves, not after. This gets something going forward at your opponent as you go forward at your opponent. A mistake is to go forward at your opponent without throwing something at him as you do so. He can hit you as you come in if you give him nothing to occupy his attention. My motto here is *'If you don't give him something to do, he'll give you something to do'*. Exceptions to this are when you are, as a tactic, moving in at a measured entry speed and blocking what he throws at you (aggressive defense) or creeping into range. All other attack modes, however, you apply initial move.



*Initial move is where your entire body moves at the same time as the strike.*

Defensive timing is just as simple. Offensive and defensive timing both hinge on change. Your opponent starts (hopefully) out of range. Well, in order to hit you he has to come in at you. That is a change in position in space, from farther to closer. If you are going to evade by angling or backing up, that is the time to do it. If your timing is acute you can wait till the last instant and make him miss by a hair. If you are going to block, then start your blocking action as he starts his attack so that you intercept the attack or cover against the attack.

Note: You're going to have to develop your Monitoring in order to develop split second timing. That will be essential. It will be hard to determine when if you don't know what or where to spot in the first place. Timing is a decision of when. Offensive timing is your decision of when to attack. Defensive timing is your spotting of their decision of when to attack and your "when" of handling it.

Where does speed play into this? Speed is an attribute. I don't worry much about the development of speed. Everybody has a certain miles per hour speed they can attain and can work at going even faster if they train to do so. Application of monitoring, timing, and distancing can nullify speed. Speed is a physical/mechanical attribute and not up into the realm of principles. You should work to develop your timing to match the speed you have, not develop your speed because your timing is poor. This statement does not negate the need for developing speedy techniques. By all means, develop speed in all your actions so that you have great speed and timing. Just don't work on speed alone.

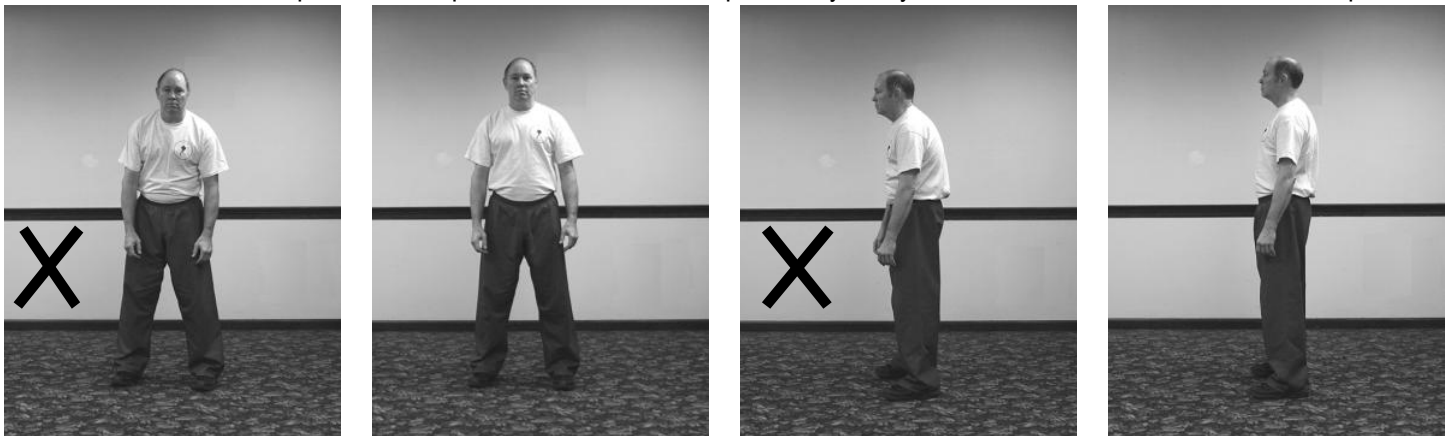
A great drill to develop timing is to choose any move you want to sharpen your timing on and get in front of a television set. Put an action movie on. When the scene changes from one shot to another, do your move right on the change. Not before or after. Do it right on the change. You'll notice that it'll take great concentration at first. As you get better at it you'll become more relaxed and your timing, your when, will get better. You can do this with any offensive or defensive move. Remember, too soon and too late are the mistakes of timing, not too fast or too slow. And keep in mind that the cornerstone of timing is monitoring.



## STRUCTURE

Structure has to do with equilibrium (balance), posture and natural body positioning. Another way to put it is it is the manner of positioning the body so that the muscles, tendons and ligaments are in natural alignment. Structure and alignment are looked at as the same thing but I make the distinction with structure having to do with the natural position of the body while alignment has to do with maximum execution. In a sense they are 'twin brothers' yet, for me, they are their own separate subjects.

When I look at structure I look at the positioning of the body itself, structural alignment. (I will go over alignment regarding you to your opponent in the next chapter.) The human body is designed to be upright. If you look at standing structure you will find that the bones align in a vertical manner, up and down. This is such a simplicity that it is often overlooked. Your posture is often stressed when you are growing up. *'Stand up straight. Don't slouch. Lift your shoulders up'* In baguazhang structure/posture is highly emphasized. Structure is essential as it has to do with your equilibrium, a fancy way of saying keeping your balance. It has to do with power development. It has to do with practically every element of core essentials, it is that important.



A very simple concept I use to describe structure is the *'three cardboard box rule.'* If you take three cardboard boxes of equal dimensions (example: three feet wide by three feet tall) and stack them exactly one on top of another, they will be stably upright. This aligns with three points of the body; the knees, the hips, and the upper torso. Take a look at anyone standing and you will see that their body structure is aligned so that one "cardboard box" is on top of another and so on.



*Three cardboard box rule.*

*Top box out of alignment.*

*Middle box out of alignment.*

*Bottom box out of alignment.*



*Your key to superior position or structure is to maintain your structure while breaking your opponent's.*

Here are some examples of how you can break your opponent's structure to your advantage. You can push, pull, bump, or invade space (occupy their privacy) to break your opponent's position. I'll demonstrate empty hand and cane actions.



*You can see me breaking his structure with a push.*



*I strike at my opponent. When he blocks and checks my cane hand, I shoot forward to jam his shoulder to knock him out of structure. I step in to follow up and strike.*



*Grabbing and pulling your opponent out of structure.*



*Mark hits at me with strike #3.*



*I angle and block his strike.*



*Right after I block I reach over my cane and grab his wrist.*

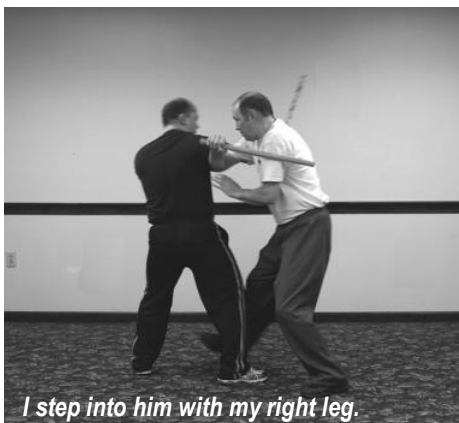


*I pull him off balance as I counter strike.*

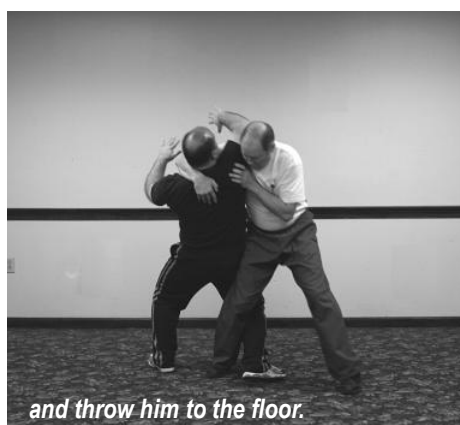
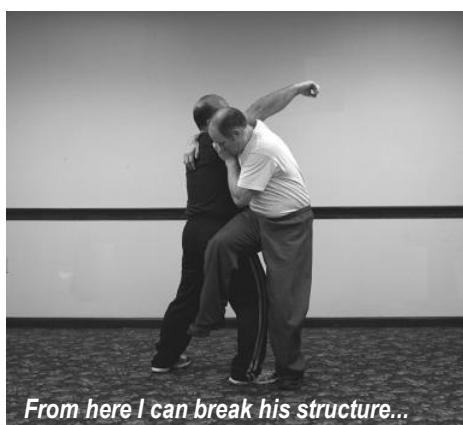
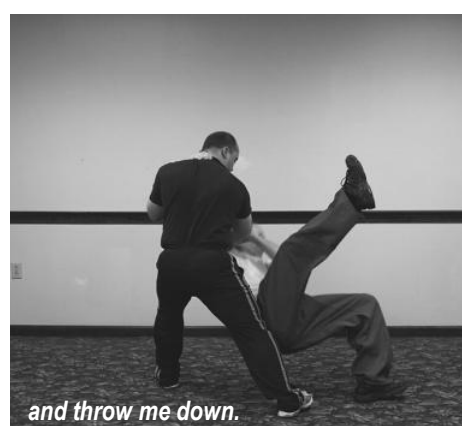


*This is a very common move in Filipino Martial Arts.*

Breaking Your Opponent's Structure - Bumping your opponent out of structure.



Breaking Your Opponent's Structure - Invading privacy.



In taking a look at structure a very key point is to keep the spinal column vertical. It is easy to do this. All you need to do is to tuck your butt under your waist. This is something that has been overlooked by many FMA practitioners as it is not very exciting or dramatic looking. I suppose it lacks an esthetic flair. It has everything to do with balance in combat, however. Phillip Starr's book, *'Martial Mechanics'*, and Steven Perlman's book, *'The Book Of Martial Power'*, both stress the need for proper structure as well as good spinal alignment. Perlman states, *'Arguably, this is the single most overlooked principle of martial arts.'* I whole heartedly agree. Starr makes a good point when he states, *'In order to unify your upper and lower body so that you can move powerfully from your dantien you must maintain proper alignment of the spinal column. The dantien (in Japanese the tanden) is located roughly three finger-widths below the navel and about two finger-widths inside.'* What I bring your attention is where he states 'in order to unify your body...' This will align with the principle of integrated body action to be taken up later in this book.

Here is an interesting way to look at it. Notice that when you bend over your butt will push backwards. That is natural so that you do not fall forwards when you bend. If you do the same when you are in a stance, however, your natural structure will be off and you can be unbalanced with ease.



You see as I bend over my butt pushes out to counter my forward lean to maintain balance.



Photo #1 above shows good structure. Photo #2 shows my body out of alignment. Photos #3 & 4 show that you should get the feeling of someone pushing on the base of your spine to create a rolling under of your butt to effect spinal alignment.

Your key to superior position or structure is to maintain your structure while breaking your opponent's.

Structure (along with alignment) has a lot to do with the transfer of power to your opponent when you connect with your strike as well.

When I strike I rotate my hips for power. Rotating from the hips will maintain spinal alignment. I emphasize this so that the spine will not become twisted. The spine will naturally twist to some degree but I like to not push it. Your muscles, tendons and ligaments will prevent the spine from over rotating.



*The bending of the knees will enable you to use your legs to snap your hips, enabling you to use your entire body for getting power into your strike. I overemphasize it in the photos above so you can see the full action. As you perfect this your action will be more compact.*



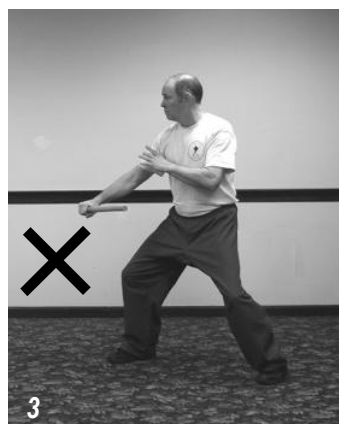
You will find that the basic structure is in the fighting stance or on guard position. You notice that the back is straight, knees are bent, the arms are tucked in rather than extended and the feet are about a shoulder width apart. With this basic position you will notice:

You are ready to move with the knees bent

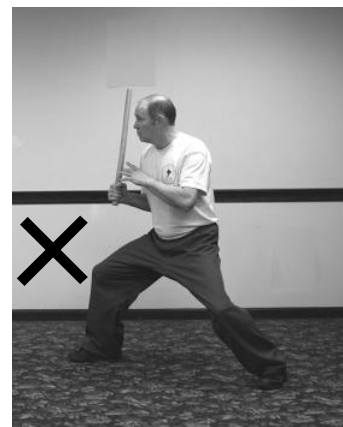
You are ready to cover distance with your feet only a shoulder width apart

Your weight is not extending past your center of balance hence your equilibrium is maintained

Your back foot is pointed at a 45 degree angle to exert pressure in a lateral direction so that you have side balance.



Stance with no target protruding (1). Hand extended (2), hand extended/head ungarded (3 & 4) - forward knee extended - all targets.



Knees bent (ready to move)

Knees straight (not ready)

Feet shoulder width apart

Feet too far apart to move quickly



Position centered

Weight extended forward

Weight extended backward

A key to keeping your balance is to maintain your structure while striking. This means using your footwork to cover the necessary distance to your opponent rather than attempting to hit him by overreaching. On the next two pages examples of striking while maintaining your structure (left row) and going out of structure with the same strike (right row).



*Strike #1 maintaining structure (left photo) and breaking structure (right photo)*



*Strike #2 maintaining structure (left photo) and breaking structure (right photo)*



*Strike #5 maintaining structure (left photo) and breaking structure (right photo)*





Strike #6 maintaining structure (left photo) and breaking structure (right photo)



Strike #7 maintaining structure (left photo) and breaking structure (right photo)



Strike #8 maintaining structure (left photo) and breaking structure (right photo)



Strike #12 maintaining structure (left photo) and breaking structure (right photo)

You maintain your structure while striking. Some systems will incorporate a slight lean while striking, however, this is usually done when the stance is elongated so your center of gravity is not endangered. I prefer to not lean with the striking and will use footwork to close distance instead. The only exception to this I make is if I keep my torso over my lead leg rather than extending it beyond that point, much like a fencer's lunge. You can get extra reach that way without going off balance. You can see an example of this in the photo below of Prof. Remy Presas executing a strike with a slight lean in his body structure.



*In the above sequence I use a lean to get out of the way of his oncoming strike while passing it to the side. I use the flow of my action to roll back into a counter strike to his arm.*



A note on low line strikes and blocks. The arc of the arm, using the shoulder as a pivot point, creates a situation where your low level blocks and strikes do not reach forward as far as your upper and mid level strikes.



To maintain structure on the striking you will need to step a bit closer. For your blocking you will have to lower your body position. Either way you will have to bend your knees. This is better than leaning forward and giving your head as a target for your opponent's free hand strike. You do not have to drop your knees to block a low line strike but if you do, you do not want to make the mistake of leaning forward.



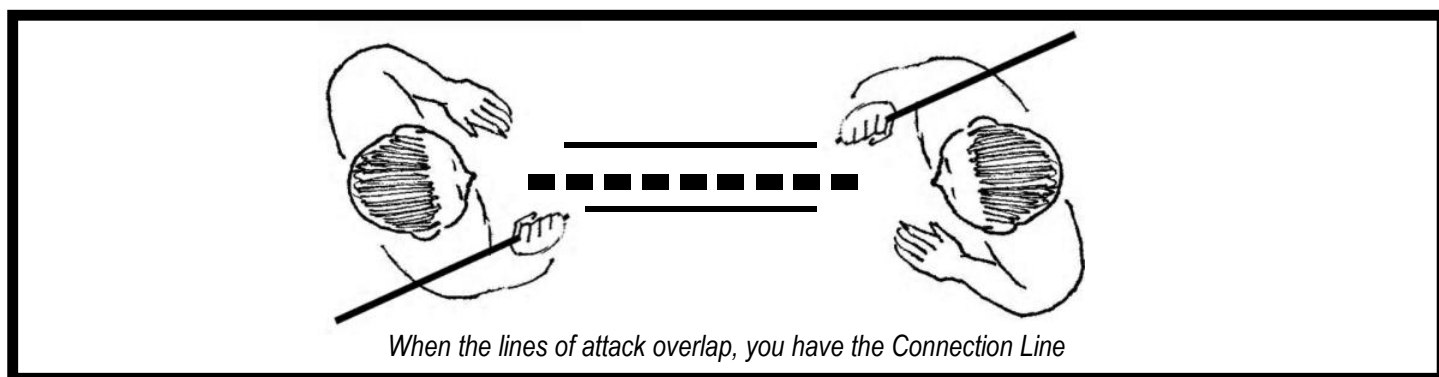
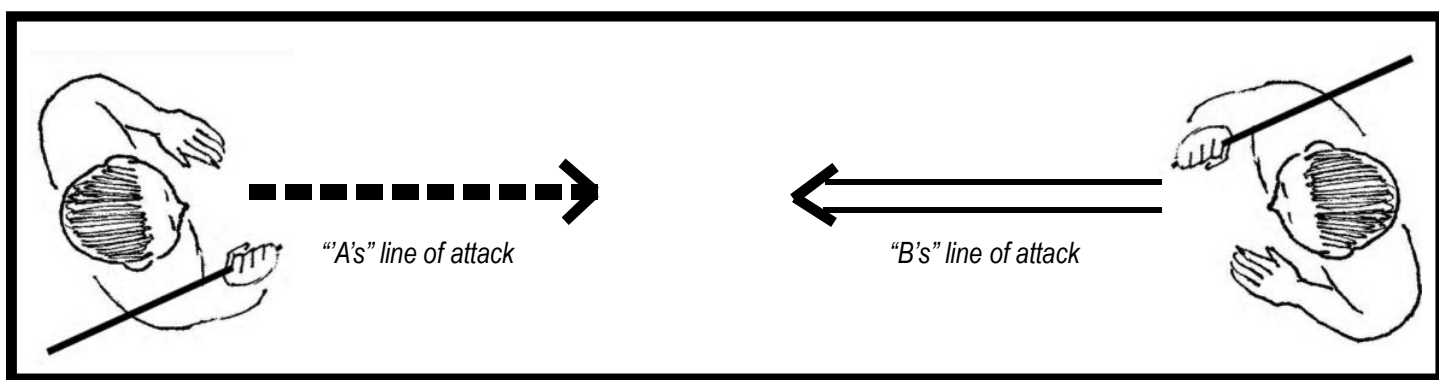
Teaching how to break structure prior to a throw from a training camp I taught in Germany.





## ALIGNMENT

Where I draw the line between structure and alignment is that *structure* has to do with balance and the natural up & down position of the body. This is illustrated in the three cardboard box rule in the last chapter. *Alignment* has to do with your position in relation to your opponent for maximum efficiency in your application of techniques. You can have beautiful structure and be out of alignment. Your alignment can be perfect but your structure can be off. I call them the twin brothers, one should not exist without the other. I look at alignment as your position relative to your opponent's position. When you are squared off with your opponent you are on what I call the 'Connection Line.' You and your opponent are faced off, in good alignment, at each other. You are, in a sense, connected.



Here is a 'Dan-ism.' When you are in good alignment with your opponent, you are in basically a position to execute a boxing jab/cross combination. This position is what I find best to set you up for both cane *and* check hand usage. At this point it is not important if your distance is such that you can actually land the jab and cross. It is important to be in a position where *both* punches would land with impact power and be in position to follow up or recover to your guard position. Here is where you are aligned. The jab-cross positioning ensures you have all your weapons where you can use them. Unless engaged in a joint lock or body manipulation which calls for a different body set up, the jab/cross position is your alignment to your opponent.



*The above photos show a jab-cross alignment with your partner.*



*It is this same alignment you want to maintain whether you are straight on with your partner..*



*...or you have angled off to your right or left side. Angling off to one side or another is what I call getting off of the Connection Line. You, however, want to maintain your jab-cross alignment when you do so. This way you have access to your opponent with both your cane hand and your check hand while 'segmenting' him. When you segment your opponent you reduce the number of available weapons he can immediately bring to bear against you. This gives you the momentary advantage.*





Actually, different escrima, arnis and other FMA systems will have their own concept of alignment. Some will operate from a lower stance or from a serrada (closed) position and so forth. The description on the previous page is the definition of alignment used in my school. The principle, however, is the same from system to system regardless of the stress points of that system. You will want to be in alignment with your opponent while he is out of alignment with you.

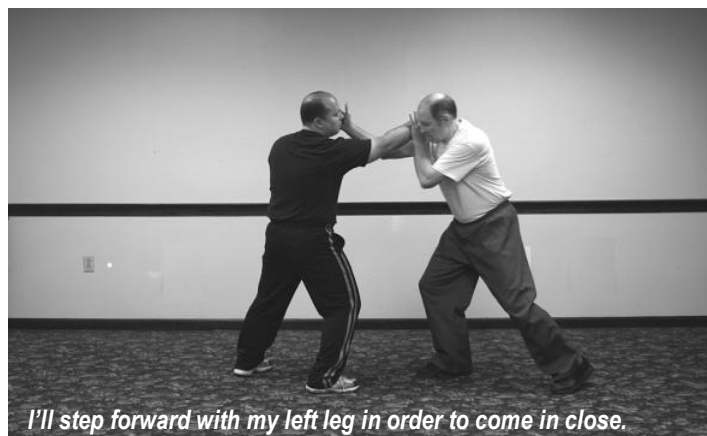


Notice that being out of alignment will 'segment' you, put you in a position of having less weapons at your disposal and opening targets up to your opponent as well.



There will be times when you will use a different alignment than the jab-cross set up, mostly when you lock or throw your opponent. I'll demonstrate several examples.





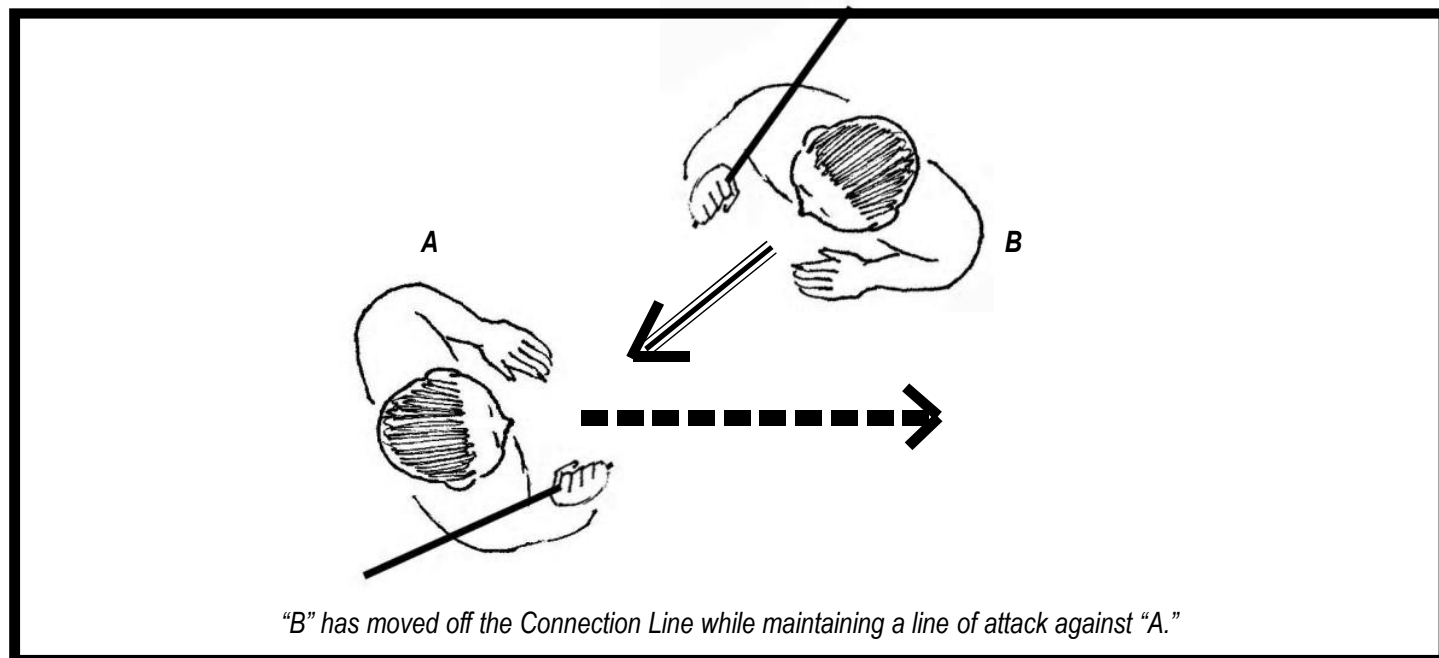








Your best execution is where you are in alignment with your opponent and he is out of alignment with you.

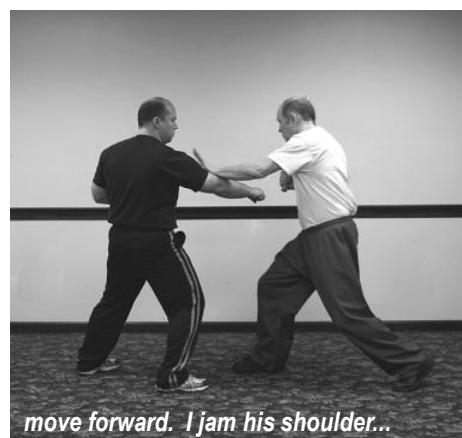


You can move your body to create an out of alignment position for him or you can make your opponent go out of alignment.









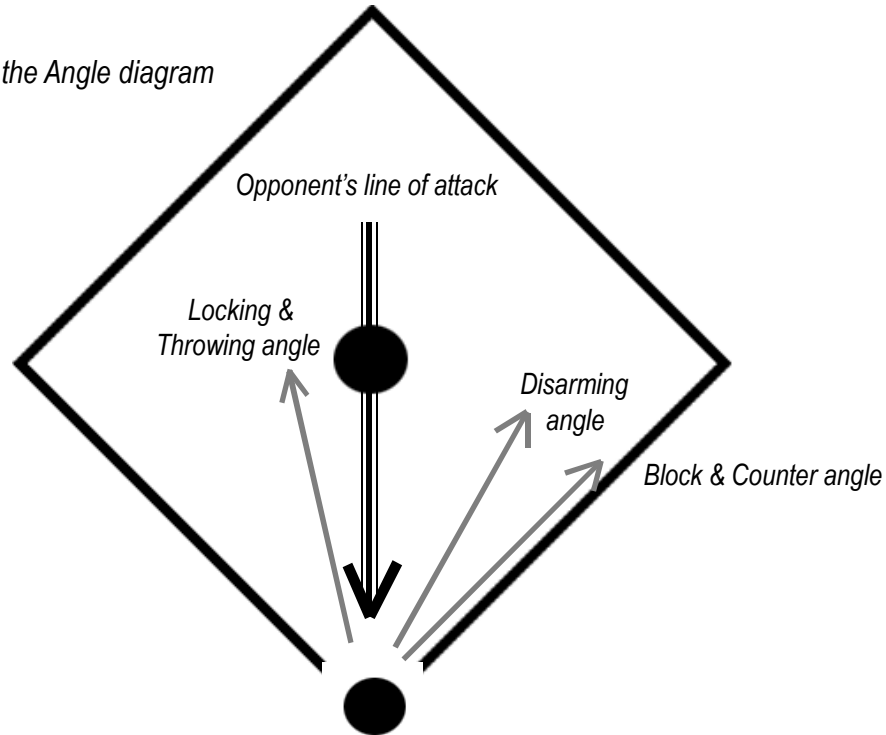






Angle stepping is one of the signature actions of Filipino Martial Arts. I will cover this more fully in the section on Movement/Stasis. When you angle your *distance alignment* (how close or far you are away from your opponent and your alignment for that distance) is going to be different for different actions. Your block and counter strike degree of angle will be larger than your angle to execute a disarm technique. Your block and counter lock or throw degree of angle will be sharper than your disarm angle. I call this '*shaving the angle*'. One of the finer points of alignment is knowing how sharp to cut the angle in order to execute any particular move. It is even more important to understand what you cannot execute from which degree of angle. These are fine points of alignment that can be taught and understood.

*Shaving the Angle diagram*



*When I execute a simple block and counter I find a 45 degree angle gives me more than enough room to fire the counter strike.*





*The above is an example of shaving the angle when disarming my opponent. You notice that my angle has to be sharper so that I have easy access to my opponent's cane.*



*As I go for locking and body management maneuvers, I shave the angle tighter and tighter. The above demonstration of going for the shoulder/elbow lock (or break) shows how tightly I cut the angle in order to gain access to his arm.*



*For a body push the angle has to be tight as well. This is to ensure your thrust has enough follow through to off balance your opponent.*



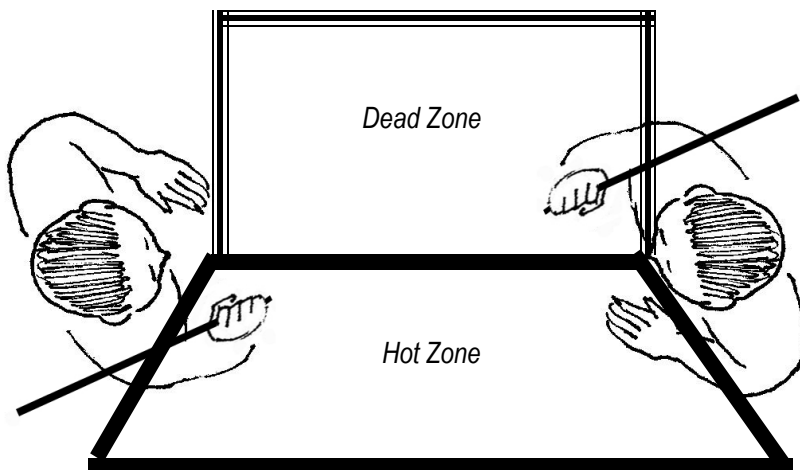
*Here is the body jam from a view where you can see how tight the angle is. In the earlier photos it appears that the hit came from straight on but, in fact, for the body jam to be most effective it needs to be done at an angle.*





*In this example, after I make the connection to loop my cane around his neck, I take a step to my rear to effect the take down.*

Zoning is another alignment factor. Zoning, simply stated, is the action of going from the line of fire to a safe spot. Example: strike number 1 (forehand strike to the head or temple). The line of fire is from the chamber spot to the point of contact. This is the space the cane travels through. This is a hot zone. Moving to the side where the cane is *not* traveling through is called zoning. I call the safe space the dead zone. Whether you step or lean, you are still zoning.



*Hot zone and dead zone for Strike #1*



*Strike #1 in the Hot Zone*



*Angling from the hot zone to the dead zone*



Your dead zone can also be below the line of fire of a head strike. This usually pertains to strikes numbers 1 & 2. The abanico is also a great example of this. When you become skilled at monitoring, recognizing the abanico will be a snap and you will be able to go under its line of force during your defense.



*I feed Mark a #12 strike. As he does...*



*an umbrella defense, his cane hand rises,*



*signalling an abanico strike on the way.*



*I drop my knees, duck under his strike,*

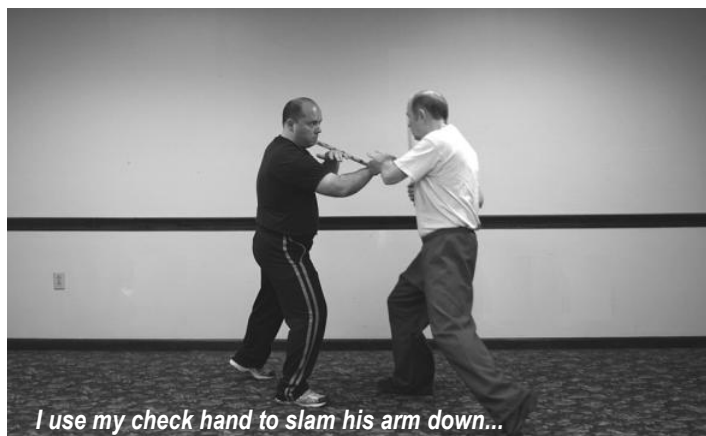


*and fire a counter strike to his knee.*

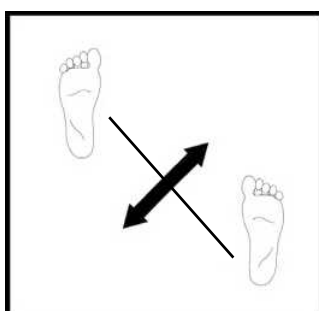
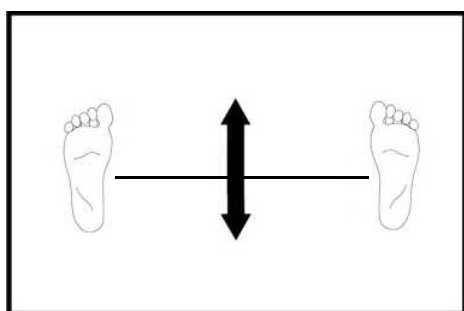


Note: You won't always make the 'right' decision and will sometimes move into the hot zone. This is not necessarily a problem when you understand one thing and that is the designated point of impact. When a person is striking at another with an impact weapon, they will deliver the strike to hit the hardest when it reaches the target. Any untrained person will do this naturally. The fascinating thing is that, like moving your finger past a flame and not getting burned, when you move into the strike, you are moving into the hot zone before it becomes really hot. You jam the strike before it gains decent impact power. Even though this is a 'mistake', this is a drill point that is often overlooked. You should drill this until 'accidentally moving into the strike' is as correct as zoning out of the path.

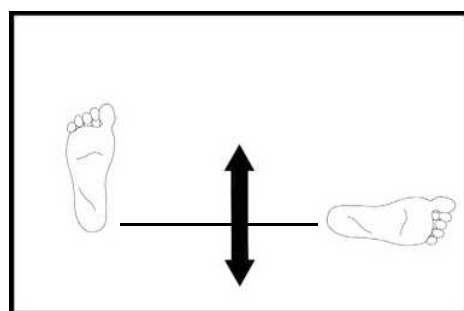




Here is another interesting point to make: when your opponent is out of alignment it is easier to break his structure. Notice in the photos below that if I push straight against him, he is braced and his alignment doesn't break. If I push or pull in the direction of his 'dead angle' (the straight line direction from between his feet), he goes off balance right away.



*Dead angles*



How can you tell if you are out of alignment or not? Your body will tell you if you connect up right. The less struggling you do, the better alignment you have. I will show some examples starting with the next page.

Remember earlier in the text where I said I began to *feel* my teacher? This is what I meant. GM Remy didn't struggle when he joint locked you or threw you. He touched and you were in pain or you went down. He instinctively knew alignment and how to exploit it. His body management was developed to a high degree. By understanding structure and alignment yours will develop as well.





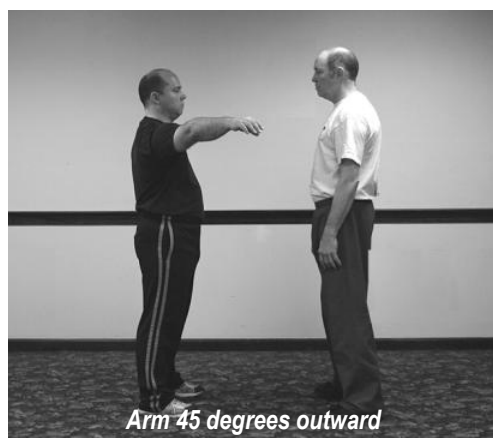




Note the difference between my partner being in alignment and my breaking his alignment.



My partner's arm is in a much stronger position when it is in natural alignment with his body structure . If I move his arm across his body past his center (photo 2) or outward at least 45 degrees to the side (photo 3), his arm 'detaches from the main frame' and is much easier to joint lock him.



This photo was taken at the a martial arts camp I put on in Brevard, North Carolina. Notice my alignment with my partner and that I have manipulated him into being out of alignment with me.



## STRUCTURE IN (DURING) TRANSITION

The next two chapters are very important, but overlooked parts in martial arts teaching. These are:

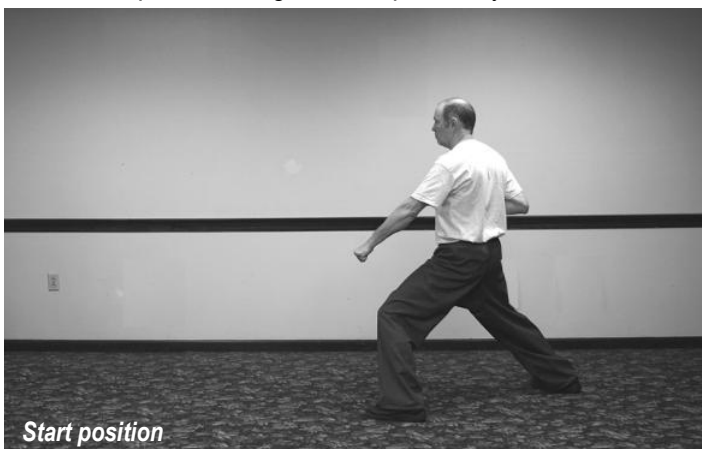
1. How to maintain your structure while moving and
2. How to maintain your alignment while moving.

Structure in transition has to do with not letting the body go out of structure and alignment while in motion. This is the toughest thing to do in either solo exercises or partner training. If you look at the construct of any cycle of action, it is composed of three aspects: start, change and stop. It is relatively easy to have structure while you are at the beginning of a move or when it is finished. It is in the aspect of change where it is very difficult. This requires incredible command of the body.

This is something that is not talked about very much. When you go from one position to another, a lot of emphasis is placed on the *finish* position. Your transitioning is equally important if not even more important than the finish position. Structure and balance in movement takes an incredible amount of practice and work.

Let's look at structure in transition first. Structure in transition is hardly ever spoken about yet it is one of the prime reasons your locking or throwing fails. I have seen where a student will successfully break his partner's structure, be in proper alignment and yet then go off balance or fail to execute successfully. Then he tries again with the same result. After awhile he either gives up the move as incomprehensible or reverts to the time honored solution beginners use – go faster and harder. What is hardly ever spotted is that his own structure was broken by his own action and that is what caused the technique to fail. Well, how do we develop this?

Anyo (forms) training is perfect for developing *structure in transition*. Quite often forms stress going from structure to structure with the emphasis being the final position you land in.



You can see this in practically any karate competition. From pose to pose the form looks great. What is more important is the maintenance of your structure during your movement. The more your body falls out of structure during movement, the less likely you will be able to execute your action. It is not necessary to stiffen your body in an attempt to maintain structure. Concentration on moving your body as *an entire unit* is going to be the key.



This was really brought to my attention was when I began training in baguazhang. The stepping was slow and the emphasis was connection with my entire body. A great way to solo train this aspect is to do the arnis forms slowly using the taiji heel-toe, 'single weighting' type of step. It will be frustrating for you at first but the benefits are many fold.



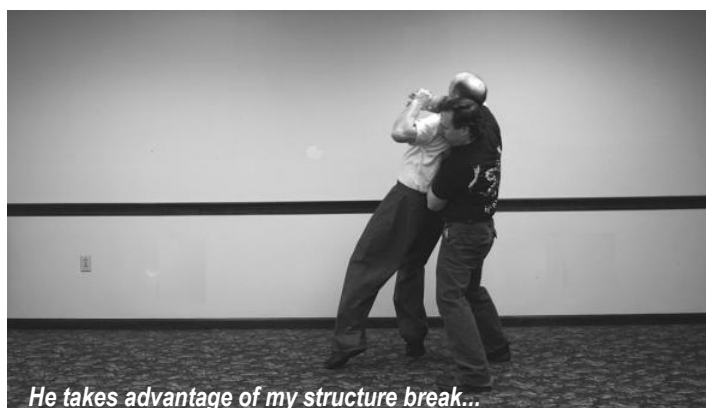
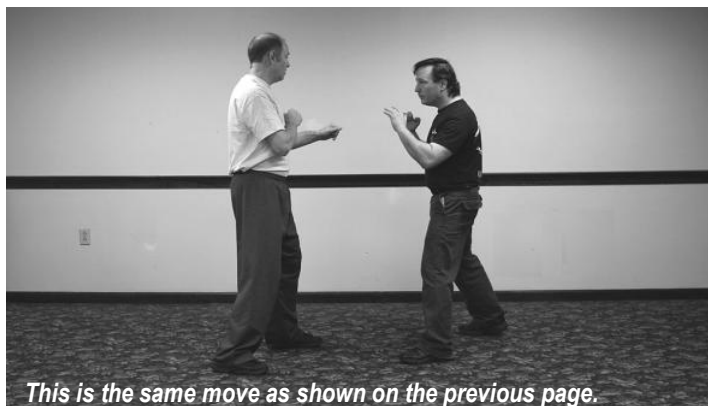
*The heel-toe step. I step with my rear foot. My heel touches down with no weight on that leg. From there I gradually roll onto the flat of my foot.*

Here is an example maintaining structure in transition from the last sequence in Modern Arnis Anyo #6. I'll demonstrate it incorrectly and correctly, solo and with a partner to show the ramifications of going out of structure when you try to apply a move.

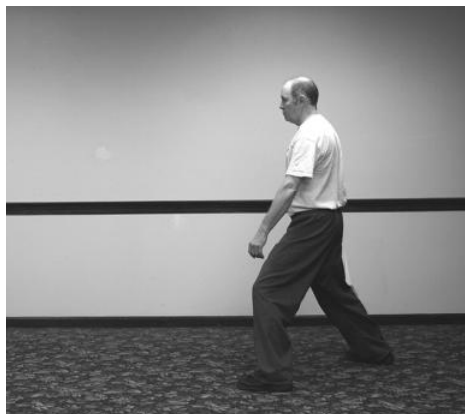




Here is an example of what could go wrong when you go out of structure during your execution of a standing center lock.



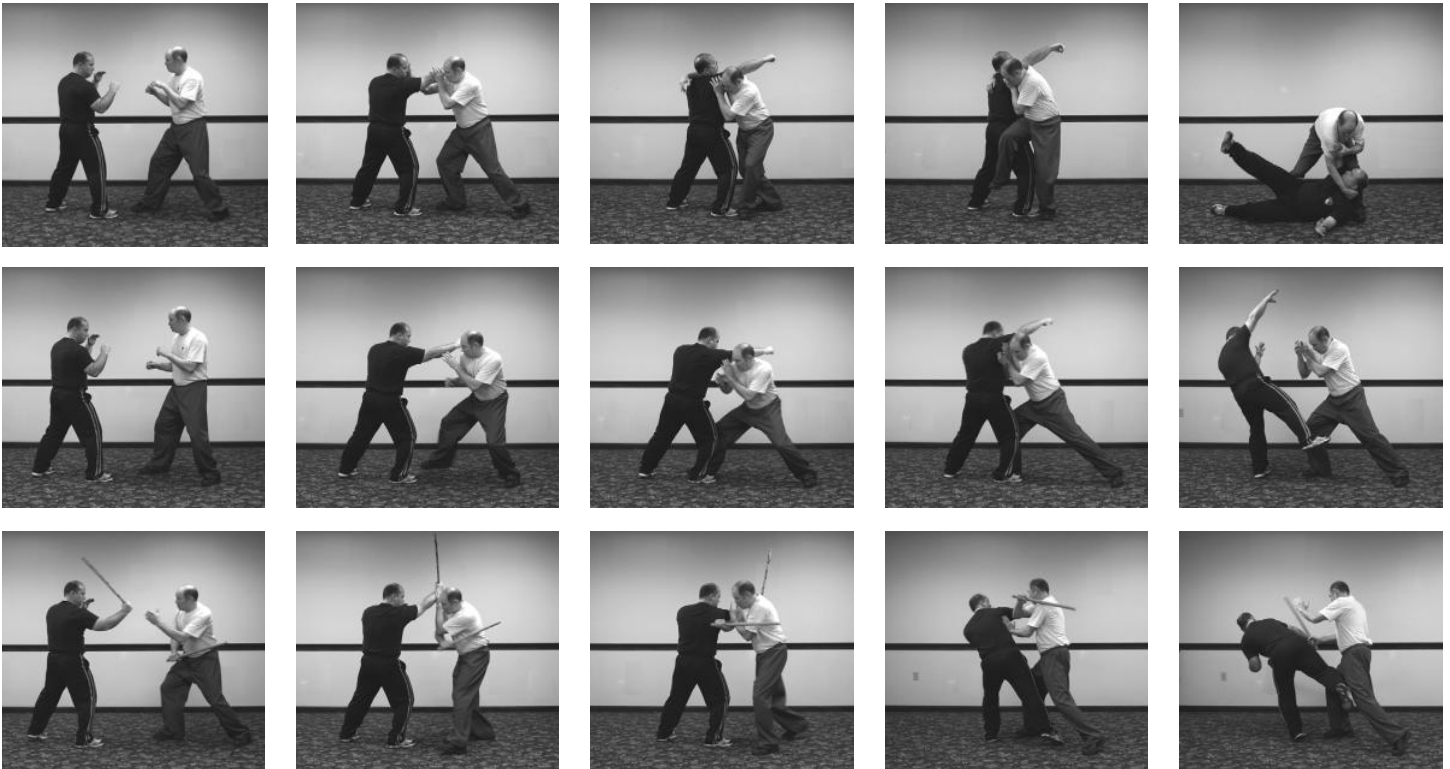
This is how the solo section should be done when maintaining structure during transition.



Here is the complete movement from the anyo maintaining structure during its entirety. Note that I break his structure prior to the execution of the lock.

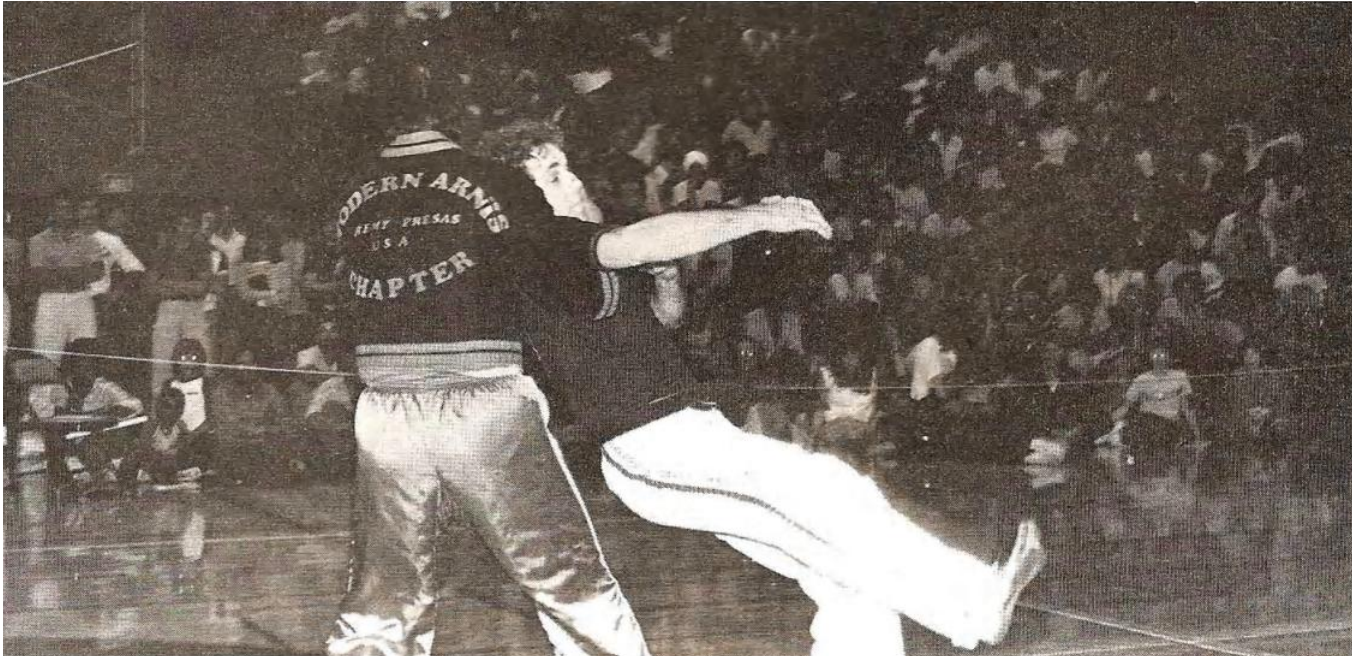


Another way to train maintaining your structure and breaking your partner's structure is to develop a willingness to occupy your partner's space – to *occupy* his space, not just coexist in it. This is an unseen point where most locking actions and throws fail. Quite often I've seen a student try a lock or throw on their partner yet unconsciously avoid bumping into their partner. They'll bend their body or not get close and so forth. This keeps you from keeping your structural integrity intact. These examples were taken from pages 24 and 25 to show you what I mean by invading your opponent's privacy. You notice I get in very close to execute the technique. The ability to do this is a must for self defense abilities. If you freeze when your opponent gets too close to you he will have the advantage.



Why should there be such an emphasis on maintaining structure in transition? Simple. When you begin to manipulate your opponent you will need all the balance you can get to execute your technique successfully. Any opponent who has any experience will attempt to counter you during your transition. If your structure is maintained during movement, your action, you will be in a position to reverse their action. Another thing to consider is that your opponent might try to feint you out of position in order to execute his technique. Out of position is another way of saying out of structure. However under stressed this is, it is however, one of the most important core basics in FMA.

The photo below is a great example of Structure In Transition. Prof. Remy Presas is executing a spiraling head throw and notice that he is maintaining his structure while completely dominating mine.

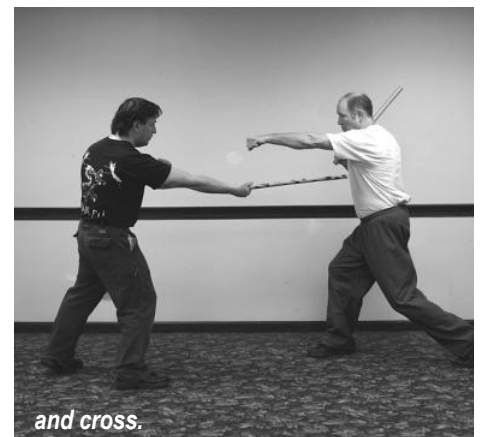
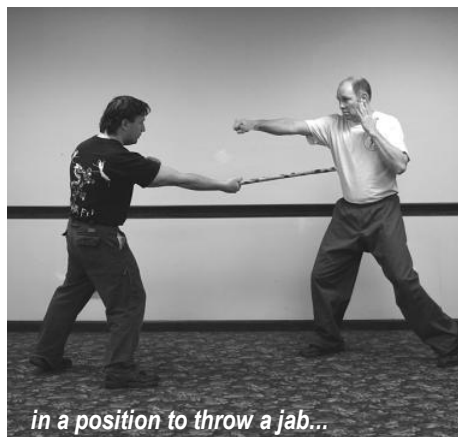




## ALIGNMENT IN (DURING) TRANSITION

This is a blood brother to structure in transition. Simply stated this is keeping your position or alignment while you move.

The first way of training this is in your block and counter exercises. While you angle step and block, work on maintaining your alignment. You can do this as a specific exercise: angle step and block your partner's strike, then jab/cross from that position. If you can execute the jab/cross combination being in position to punch effectively, you did all right. If not, you have to rework it so that you can. For the purpose of this drill it is not important if you can land the punches as you are working a stick striking oriented distance.



Another good way to practice this is first to keep visual alignment with your partner as you train. This is another 'no-brainer' as it is dangerous to take your eyes off your opponent but many people do. When you take your eyes off of your opponent it is too easy for you to misalign yourself and you are liable to their counter to your action. You do not need to stare at him to do this. Keeping him in your peripheral vision is just fine. The main thing is to not lose awareness of your opponent while executing a move. I'll illustrate this on the next page.



Example of misaligning yourself due to lack of focus on your opponent.



Example of maintaining your alignment in motion because of focussing on your opponent.



Tactile alignment can work as well as visual alignment for you. Here is a drill I used in a seminar in Atlanta, Georgia, that taught the concept of tactile alignment very well.



*As my partner punches, I parry...*



*and slide to my left.*



*This puts me at an angle to him.*



*He shifts to realign himself with me.*



*As he does so, I shift to my right.*



*He punches as I shift.*



*I parry his punch during my step...*



*and end up again at an angle to him.*



Here is an interesting point for you to digest. When you know all of your possibilities from whatever position you face your opponent in, you will never be out of alignment to one degree or another. Optimum alignment, however, is another matter.



*The key is preferably to never go out of optimum alignment with your opponent while keeping your opponent out of alignment with you. Maintaining alignment while in motion is a key to superiority. One thing I remember about working with GM Remy is it was so hard to get him out of position. Part of the problem was he was very adept at getting me out of position while keeping his. He did this whether he moved or stood still. This is another discovery I made while I was not listening to him but feeling him execute on me.*

This photo of me demonstrating Alignment In Transition was taken in 1994 at a seminar in Portland, Oregon.



## DISTANCING

Understanding proper distancing is the key to understanding what options you have in relation to your opponent. Proper distancing is actually a misnomer. It should be 'effective distancing.' Either way you should know what you can and can't do from how close you are or aren't to your opponent. There are generally three accepted distances in FMA: largo (large or long distance), medio (middle range) and corto (close range). The general method of determining range in Filipino Martial arts are taken from Mark V. Wiley's latest book: *The Complete Guide to Eskrima Disarms*.

**Long Range** (largo) - This is the furthest distance at which either you or your opponent can be stuck by the other's weapon. It is measured by standing facing your partner with arms and weapons fully extended, wherein only the top six inches of your weapons can touch the other person's wrist. In this range your weapon can engage and redirect your opponent's weapon, or it can strike his weapon hand. However, your rear hand is too far to check the opponent's weapon hand, and your weapon is too far to strike the opponent's body (without twisting or leaning forward). The disarms that are most safe and effective in long range are commonly known as 'de-fanging the snake' disarms.



**Medium Range** (medio) - This is the distance between you and your opponent where either of you can be struck by the other's weapon, the rear hand can check or lock the weapon-holding hand, but it is too far to strike the body (without twisting or leaning forward). This range is measured by standing facing your partner with arms extended and weapons held up at 90 degrees and with the wrists overlapped. In this range, your weapon can redirect or block the opponent's weapon, and since your rear hand can check, parry or pass the opponent's weapon/hand, you can also directly strike the opponent's body with your weapon.

**Close Range** (corto) - This is the closest distance you can be to your opponent and effectively maneuver your weapons. This range is measured by standing facing your partner with arms extended, weapon held up at 90 degrees, with your wrist in line with your partner's shoulder. In this range both your weapon and rear hand can reach the opponent's body. In this range techniques of checking, parrying, passing, disarming, locking and moving to the opponent's back are safely utilized. Photos of medio and corto range on next page.





*Traditional medium (medio) range*



*Traditional close (corto) range*

A 'Dan-ism' is that I regard distancing by the dictionary definition of the word *range*; *the farthest distance at which something can operate effectively, e.g. the farthest distance to which a gun can shoot a bullet or shell.*

In this wise:

- LARGO is usually where you can hit your opponent's extended hand with your own cane or just outside of that range.
- MEDIO is where you are close enough to hit the body and head with your and you can grab your opponent's cane or arm.
- CORTO is your cane butting and infighting distance. These are generalities as there can be subdivisions or degrees of each range. These will do for the purpose of this chapter.



*The critical distance line - just out of largo range.*



*Largo range*



*Medio range. Close enough to block the cane.*



*Close enough to hit the cane arm.*



Prior to showing options at different ranges I'll introduce the basic strikes. Pretty much any system of FMA uses a series of 12 strikes. In MA-80 I use 14 strikes. The strikes are numbered instead of named. This is a peculiarity of FMA. Different systems have different targets for their series of strikes. Starting on the next page I will demonstrate the original 12 strikes I learned in Modern Arnis and then the two additional strikes for my system.

- Strike #1 - Forehand strike to the left temple
- Strike #2 - Backhand strike to the right temple
- Strike #3 - Forehand strike to the left elbow
- Strike #4 - Forehand strike to the right elbow
- Strike #5 - Thrust to the stomach
- Strike #6 - Forehand thrust to the left pectoral muscle
- Strike #7 - Underhand thrust to the right pectoral muscle
- Strike #8 - Backhand strike to the right knee
- Strike #9 - Forehand strike to the left knee
- Strike #10 - Forehand thrust to the left eye
- Strike #11 - Underhand thrust to the right eye
- Strike #12 - Downward strike to the crown
- Strike #13 - Upward strike to the groin
- Strike #14 - Central thrust to the face



Strikes 1 - 14 continued.



Strikes 1 - 14 continued.



Strikes 1 - 14 continued.



I'll mention a couple of variations of the numbered strikes at this time. The first I nicknamed the 'Susie 7'. This is named after a student of mine who appears later in this book. Rather than starting her #7 thrust from her left side, she has this annoying habit of starting it from dead center. The only reason I don't correct her on this is because it keeps me alert to a strike coming from an off angle.





Application of the 'Susie 7.'



Bram Frank uses a variation of strikes #6 & 7 where he aims for the spleen (#6) and liver (#7). He uses the short and long blade so he is looking at stabbing rather than striking.



'Bram 6'



Stabbing to the spleen



'Bram 6' with the bolo



'Bram 7'



Stabbing to the liver



'Bram 7' with the bolo

Utilizing my system of delineating range, here are some of the options you will have for various applications. All of the names for the techniques will be described in the photos.

**Striking:**

Largo - Clipping, slashing, pointing

Medio – the blast, mid-range clipping, spiking, stabbing, slashing, abanico, wetik

Corto – Spiking, off angle stabbing, close quarters clipping, ‘Sir Bob’

**Defense:**

Largo – Defensive stepping, defang, slipping, passing

Medio – Blocking with the cane, passing, palusut, disarming, body shifting while blocking, empty hand blocking and passing

Corto – Checking, empty hand blocking, preemptive striking

**Empty hand:**

Largo – Kicking

Medio – Punching, joint locking, tusok (thrust or push), tulok (pulling), tripping & sweeping

Corto – Knees, elbows, locking, throwing, offsetting, close quarters kicking

**LONG RANGE STRIKING** The characteristics of a Clip Strike are that it hits with the tip of the cane and its follow through. This gives the strike a very sharp impact.



The Slash is more of a characteristic motion of the arm than the weapon. When you hit with an impact weapon the concept is not to *cut* with it. An impact weapon has no cutting edge so a sliding slash action will actually lessen the impact. You slam with the cane and then slide with the arm follow through. An interesting point is that a hard weapon hitting a solid object will rebound off that object, even if only slightly. This rebound will allow your weapon to follow through easily. Hit a telephone pole or something similarly hard and you will see the rebound. When you hit to the body you want to slam the cane into the body. The impact of the cane into the mass of it will cause it to decelerate but only after it has hit hard. Then you draw it through. Hitting a heavy bag will give you the idea of what I'm talking about.



Slashing strike to the body.



*The key to a slash to the body is to...*



*slam the body with your strike and...*



*then draw it through after impact.*

Pointing is where you execute a regular strike with the intention of extending the point of the cane at the last moment into a stab action. Illustrated below is Pointing from a #12 strike.



This is an especially sneaky type of strike. You appear to be out of range of a swing strike or your opponent steps back to avoid the strike. At the tag end of the action you stab forward to the face.

**MEDIUM RANGE STRIKING** The Blast is a power strike with the objective of finishing the fight in one or two strikes. The Blast's characteristics are 1. rather than extending your cane's distance by allowing your wrist to bend when you strike, your cane is held at a 90 degree angle to the grip and 2. you use the straightening of the elbow to deliver your strike rather than through the shoulder. Adding body torque to this strike makes it one of the most powerful strikes in FMA.



Strike #1 - The Blast



Strike #2 - The Blast



Strike #12 - The Blast



Notice the right angle of the cane to the wrist.

Medium range Clipping is done by tightening the arc of your arm action.



Notice how I draw my elbow close to my...



body to tighten up the arc of my strike.



Example of medium range clipping for your counter strike.



*Mark strikes with a #2 strike.*



*I angle step & check with my open hand.*



*I chop downwards against his forearm...*



*hitting with the tip of my cane.*



Hitting with the butt of your cane (punyo) is usually done at close or corto range. I call this Spiking. You can Spike your opponent, however, at medium range as well. Here are several examples.



*If I can punch my opponent...*



*I can hit him with the butt (punyo) of my cane.*



Here is an example of using a Spike as your counter action in medium range.



Stabbing and Slashing can be done at Medium Range.



The Abanico is normally done as a speed strike rather than a power strike. It is done in a back/forth fanning motion.



*Mark strikes at me with a #12 strike.*



*I 'umbrella' and raise my cane arm.*



*I flip my cane from the up position...*



*to his left temple.*



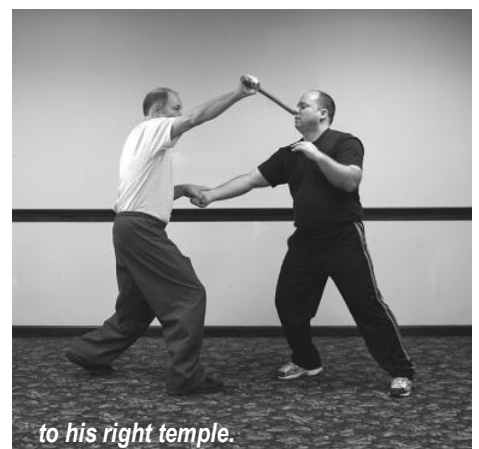
*Upon impact I use the recoil...*



*of the strike to send my cane...*



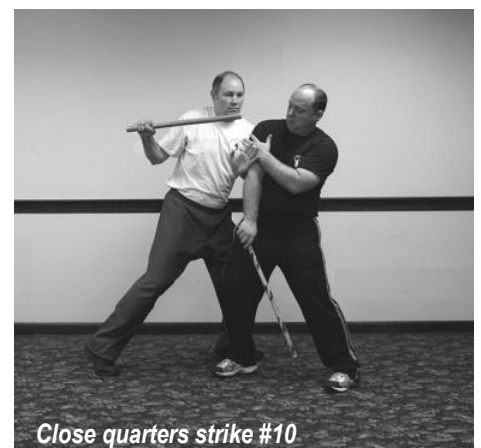
*to his right temple.*



The Wetik is a sharp, rapping strike. It is the opposite of the Blast.



**CLOSE RANGE STRIKING** At close (corto) range you can use some of the previously learned striking methods such as Spiking and close quarters Stabbing.



Close quarters Clipping is a favorite action of mine. It is a very unexpected move. Usually, a fighter will use the butt of the cane when in close. All you do is show your opponent the butt of your cane and more often than not, he will try to check it. You lean back slightly and clip his check hand. It takes some getting used to, hitting from that close, but it is very effective.



'Sir Bob' is a nickname for a close quarters striking method that emphasizes full body action. GM Bobby Tabamina of the balintawak eskrima school demonstrated this at the 3rd World FMA Festival in 2006. I liked it and adopted it for my group.





*LONG RANGE DEFENSE - Angle stepping*



*Long Range Defense - Retreat*





Long Range Defense - Side step



Long Range Defense - Striking as your opponent advances



Long Range Defense - Fade back and striking as your opponent advances



Long Range Defense - Slipping (sideways leaning) the strike



Long Range Defense - Passing the strike



*MEDIUM RANGE DEFENSE - Blocking*



The basic block is what is called force-to-force. It can be done singly or braced against a power blow (shown below).



*Medium Range Defense - Highline passing*



Medium Range Defense - Mid-line passing (palis-palis or palusut)



*In medium range passing, you meet...*



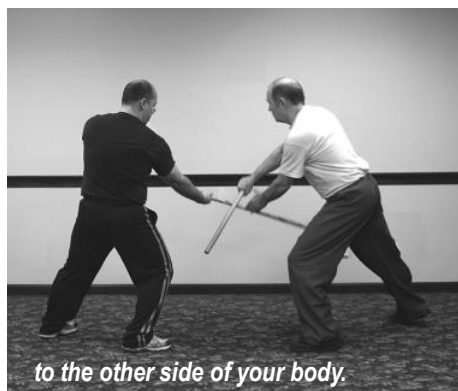
*his cane with yours and drop your...*



*check hand over the top of his cane.*



*This enables you to push his cane...*



*to the other side of your body.*



Medium Range Defense - Disarming your opponent after blocking





Medium Range Defense - Empty hand blocking and passing



CLOSE RANGE DEFENSE - Checking



Close Range Defense - Empty hand blocking





Close Range Defense - Empty hand blocking continued

This one is a specialized kind of block. This is the '*taken by surprise last resort*' block. Here you cover and take the impact on the meat of the arm while your other hand effects a capture. The key is to try to take the impact near his grip where the strike has less impact capability.



Close Range Defense - Empty hand blocking continued



Close Range Defense - Empty hand blocking continued



### Close Range Defense - Preemptive strike



### EMPTY HAND

Your empty hand ranges will split up somewhat the same way: long range (kicking), medium range (punching, joint locking, tusok [thrust or push], tulok [pulling], tripping & sweeping) and close range (knees, elbows, locking, throwing, off-setting, close quarters kicking).

### EMPTY HAND LONG RANGE - Kicking



*The Critical Distance Line for empty hand work is where...*



*you can barely touch your opponent with a long range attack.*



*An effective kick must be delivered inside the Critical Distance.*



*The bend of the leg means I have enough distance to penetrate.*

*EMPTY HAND MEDIUM RANGE - Medium Range*



*Punching*



*Joint locking*



*(two hand wrist lock)*



*Trapping & Tusok (thrust)*



*I slap down Mark's lead hand.*



*I hit Mark in the chest to upset his structure.*



*From there I step in to hit him in the face.*

*Above photo sequence is a combination of trapping and tusok (thrusting) to offset your opponent for your strike.*



*Pulling your opponent into your strike.*

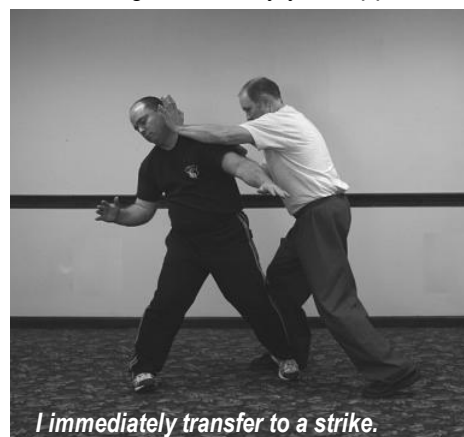


### *EMPTY HAND CLOSE RANGE*

At close range one can work body management, locking, offsetting as well as striking. Below are several examples of what you can do when in tight with your opponent.



When in close with your opponent, you will need to develop your sensitivity so that you can immediately change when your action doesn't go your way. Below is an example of an attempted close quarters joint lock being resisted by your opponent.





### Empty Hand Close Range continued



*Provided that you tuck your chamber action you can also kick from close quarters range.*

A key to effective transitioning from one move to another is the recognition of range while you transition. This way you will not go from one move which is effective to the next which is not. Often when one does this it is because it is executed in a range which is ineffective for it.



As you can see from the above examples, knowledge or range (or lack thereof) will be decisive in any encounter.

Correct understanding of distancing is a key core essential to FMA. Again I stress the key is to truly understand what you can and cannot do at whatever range you or your opponent is at. This will give you greater prediction of what your opponent can or can't do as well. The following drills will help you develop your ability to discern correct range for your tactics. The first of these drills is what is called the '6-count drill'. The template for 6-count is strike 1, 4 and 12 done back and forth. The angling involved will be more easily seen on the accompanying DVD and on the next two pages. First I will demonstrate it at medium range.



6-Count drill in full.



6-Count drill in full continued.

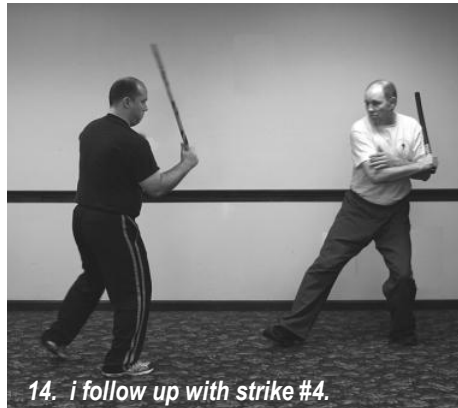


6-Count long range drill.





6-Count long range drill continued.





6-Count range adjustment drill. One person constantly is pressing forward and the other readjusts.



Defensive range drill. This drill will teach you different options of defense as your partner changes ranges on you.



Defensive range drill continued.



*Mark moves into close range to spike.*



*I jam his spike down.*



*He begins to retreat.*



*As Mark steps back...*



*he fires a #4 strike.*



*I pass it with the empty hand.*



*Mark steps back again to fire...*



*two long range strikes.*



*I block his first strike...*



*and strike directly to his hand...*

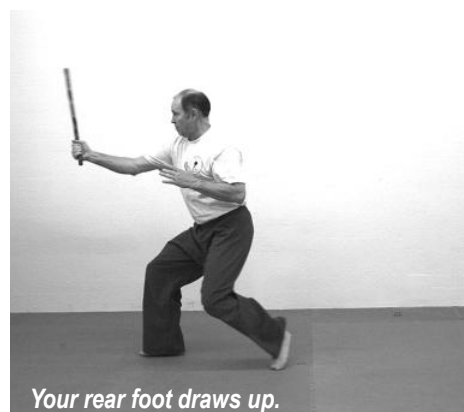
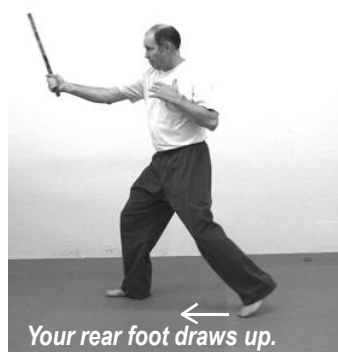
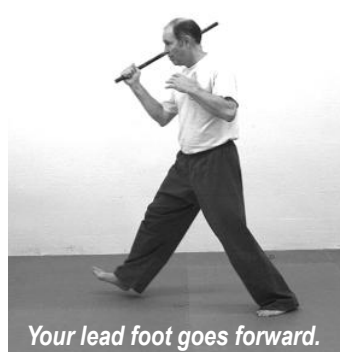


*on his second shot.*



## MOVEMENT/STASIS

A chapter on application of footwork would be incomplete without the other half of motion, immobility. Footwork is essential for establishing a position of superiority; you being in alignment with your opponent while making him be out of alignment with you, for creating and disrupting distance, and effective positioning for technique application. There are many variations of basic steps or methods of footwork. Here are the basic ones:



Footwork continued.



The applications of the Lead Foot step, Advance and Lunge are the same - come forward with your lead foot.



Footwork continued.



*The Step Through*



*Step forward with your rear leg.*



*The Lead Foot Angle Step*



*Advance forward to a 45 degree angle.*



*Lead Foot Angle Step application*



*The Rear Foot Angle Step*



*Draw your front foot back...*



*and use it to propel your...*



*lead foot forward at an angle.*



Footwork continued.



*Rear Foot Angle Step application*



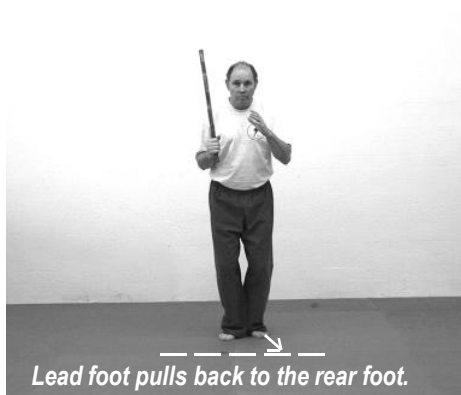
*Lead foot pulls back to the rear foot.*



*The rear foot steps forward.*



*Replacement Step #1*



*Lead foot pulls back to the rear foot.*



*The rear foot steps forward.*



*Replacement Step #1 application*



*The Replacement Step is a way of realigning yourself to your opponent while maintaining the same distance from him.*

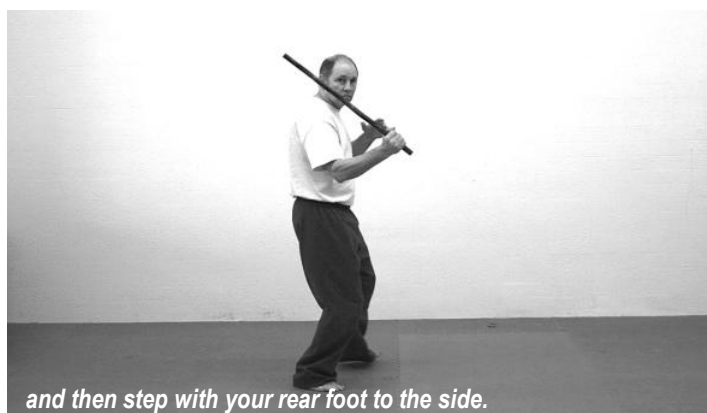
Footwork continued.



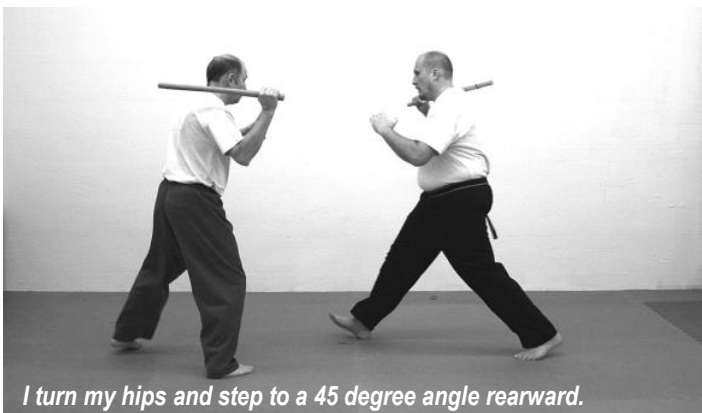
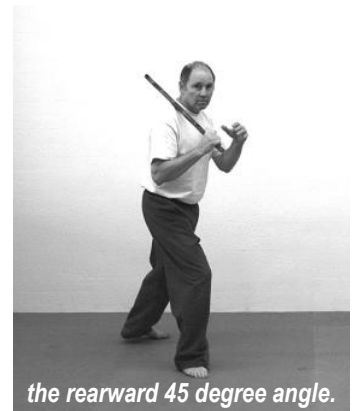
Footwork continued.



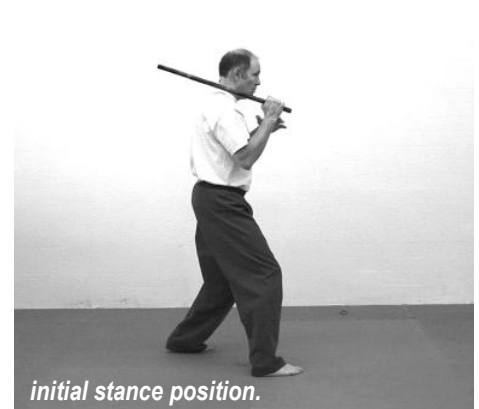
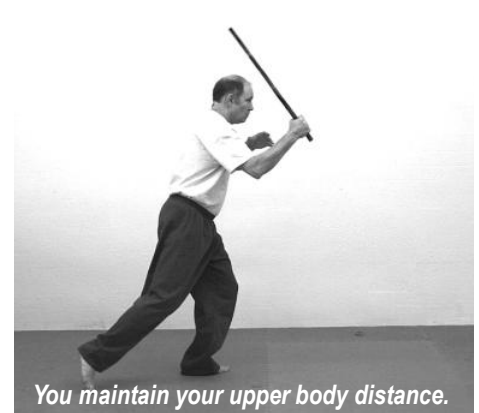
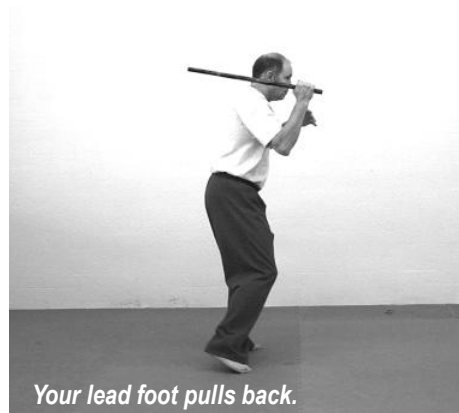
Footwork continued.



Footwork continued.



Footwork continued.



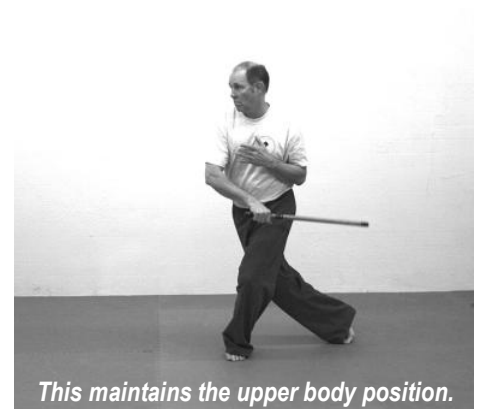
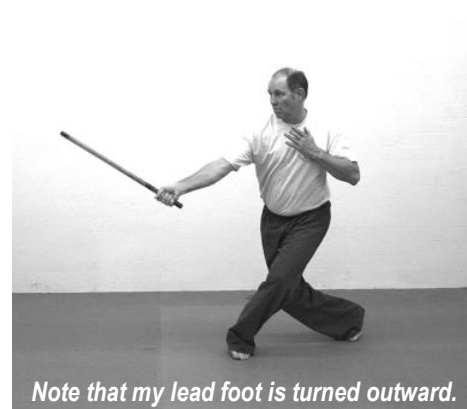
*The Floating Step is deceptive as it gives the impression that you are moving backwards when, in fact, only your front leg moves back. Your upper body doesn't move back as you step. Execute a counter strike as you pull you leg back.*



Footwork continued.

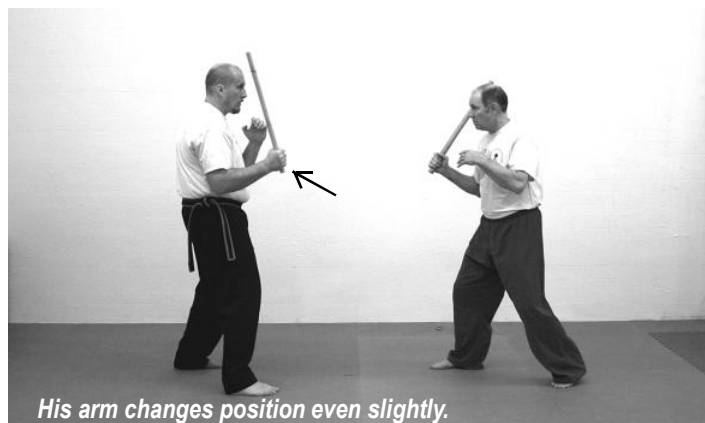


Footwork continued.

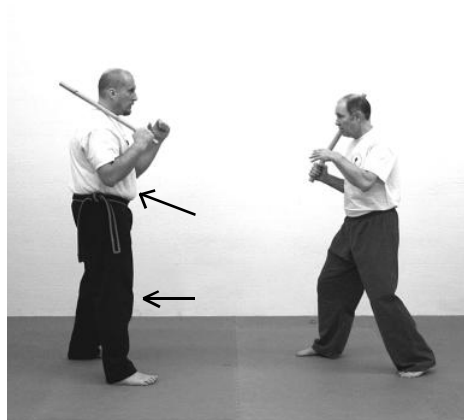


*The Cross Step is used for a temporary retreat while keeping your body at the original alignment with your opponent.*

Offensive footwork - when is the best time to move? Offensively I find it best to move as your opponent changes. Any type of change will catch him in the middle of that change, where *some* of his attention will be. Only when he is standing stock still will he have his entire attention on you.

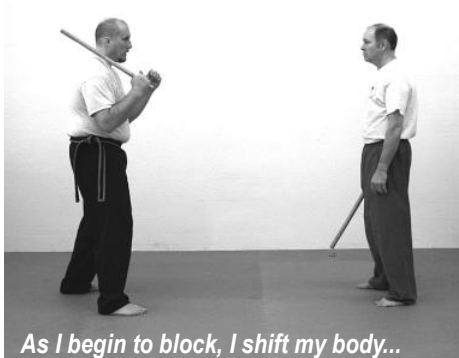


Defensively, let's take a look at any attack. Any action goes through three distinct phases: it starts, it changes (through space), it stops. I find the best time to move is somewhere in between their start and change of the action. An interesting thing to point out at this time is the term 'angle step' is a bit of a misnomer. The word step doesn't imply any kind of fast or brisk action. I suppose to get the point across it would be better to call it an '*angle launch*' so that one would get the idea of a fast take off.



*If you watch closely you will be able to see telltale signs of your opponent beginning an attack. Look at the above photos and you will see the bending of his legs and his elbow flaring out, starting his arm for the attack. Notice that my knees are already bent and ready to go. Because of this I can hit him right as he launches his attack, his 'start' point in the cycle of action.*

If you are stuck flat-footed you can move on the stop (impact) as well.

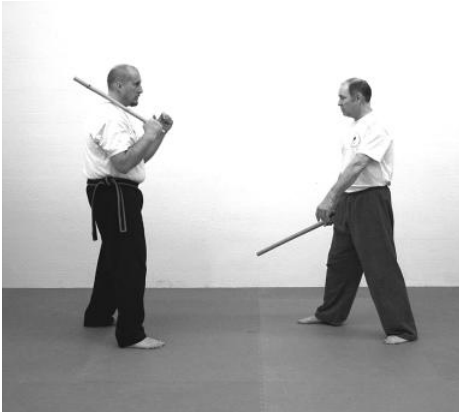


As I said earlier, the other half of the coin is application of your techniques, tactics and strategies when you do not have the opportunity to move. Lack of footwork is usually caused by three factors: 1. Poor timing, 2. Poor distancing (too close or too far), and 3. Poor preparation (knees not bent, hand not up, etc.).

Here's how I look at this. My working definition of timing is a *decision of when*. Timing is not how fast or how slow one is. That is speed or lack thereof. Timing is 'when'. The two key mistakes in timing are 1) too soon and 2) too late. A hidden factor in poor timing is lack of preparation. Your pinpoint timing can be rendered useless by using that split instant to bend your knees before moving.



Another hidden factor to poor timing is to raise your weapon to strike (or block) instead of it being already raised. Fundamentally lack of preparation will cause you to use that split instant getting ready to execute rather than executing.



Stasis operation is usually when you're caught off-guard or you are too close to move in the first place. It's all nice and fine to have impeccable footwork but one must have the opposite as well to be truly not caught off-guard.

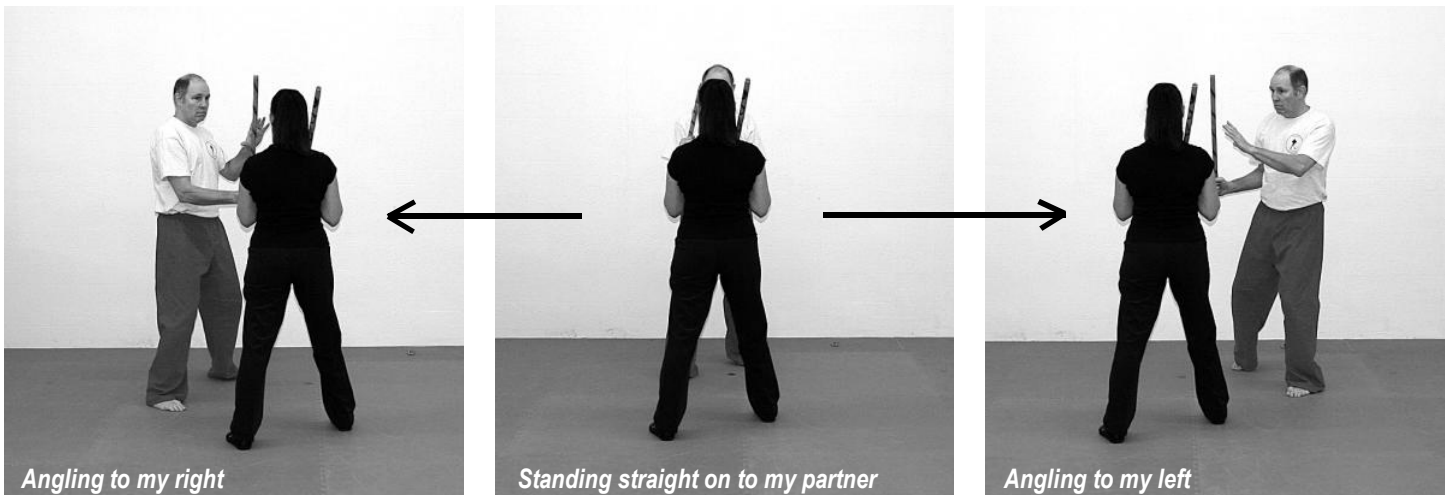


Teaching a class how on to use footwork to create distance for your counter (Germany 2007).



## LEVERAGING

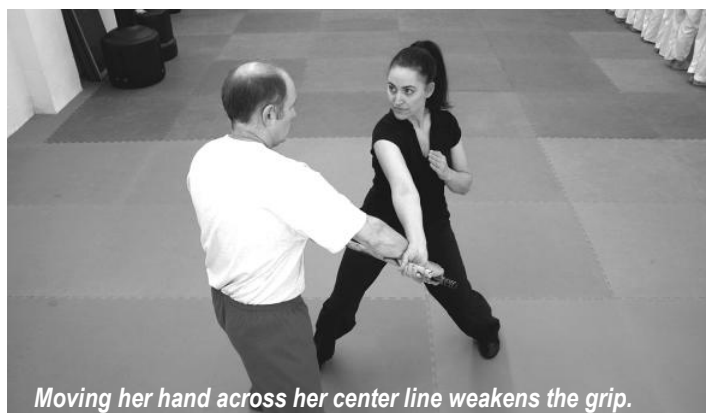
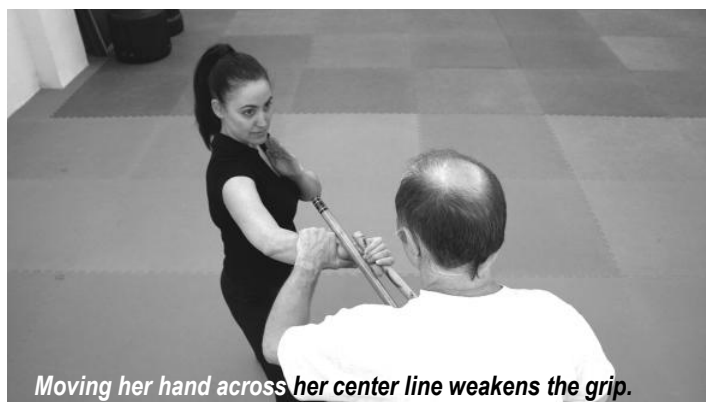
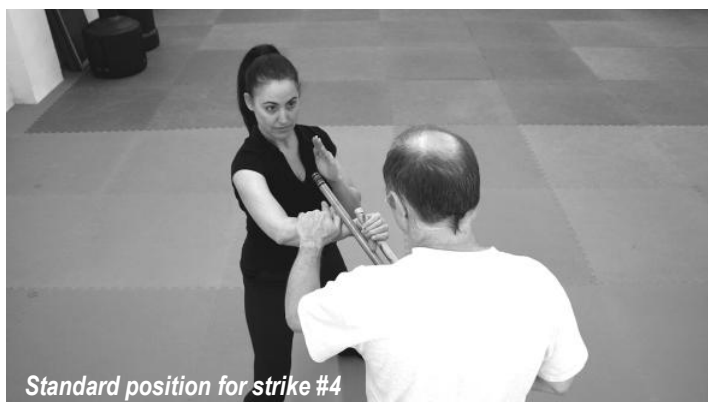
One thing GM Remy was great at was using very little strength in his execution. He was very strong but he never seemed to exert much energy. When he disarmed you it was like a hot knife going through butter. When he threw you, you just went down. One could discount this by saying he was naturally strong in the first place. I can't, however, because my second teacher in FMA, Manong Ted Buot did the same thing and I was bigger than him. Manong Ted was all timing and leveraging. My first meeting with him was incredibly illuminating. I was being introduced to him by his student, Jaye Spiro. During her private lesson he would ask me, *'Dan, what would you do against this?'* I would demonstrate how I would handle a particular action and he would counter that effortlessly and shut me down. After the third time I began to laugh quite loudly. I have no insecurities about my own skill set and here is a 72 year-old man shutting me down effortlessly. Hey, I might as well enjoy this. It was just another demonstration of the fact that there are gradients of excellence. It continues to give me something to aspire to. Leveraging enables you to maximize your own strength while not relying solely on strength. The first examples I will use to illustrate this principle is in the cane disarming techniques. Leveraging for disarming techniques works off of three factors: 1. Alignment, 2. Cane position reversal and 3. Isolate the fingers. First let's take a look at alignment. I angle step to realign myself to my opponent.



The next realignment is to misalign my opponent's arm. My opponent will have their arm in a position for any given strike. This position is usually strong as it is braced for impact. When you move their arm to one side or another, their position is weakened.



The left column shows the standard alignment. The right column shows the arm moved to misalign it.



The left column shows the standard alignment. The right column shows the arm moved to misalign it (continued).



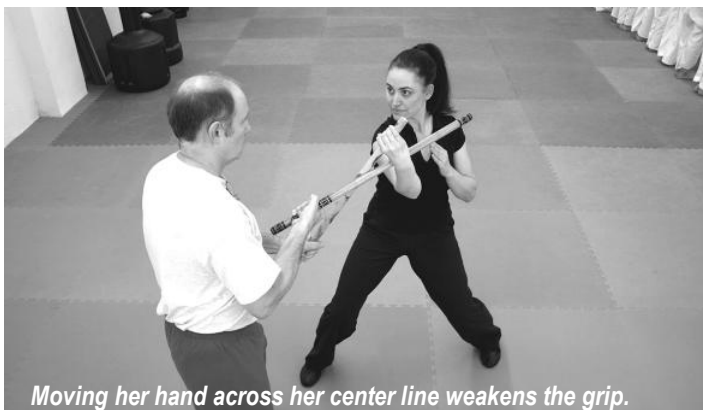
*Standard position for strike #6.*



*Moving her hand across her center line weakens the grip.*



*Standard position for strike #7.*



*Moving her hand across her center line weakens the grip.*



*Standard position for strike #9.*



*Lifting her hand across her center line weakens the grip.*



*Standard position for strike #11.*

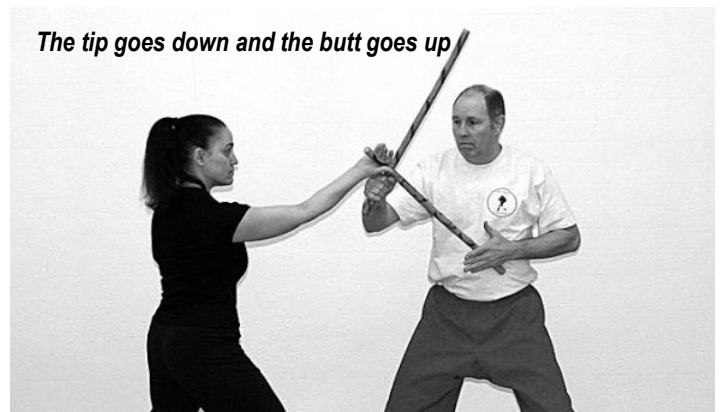
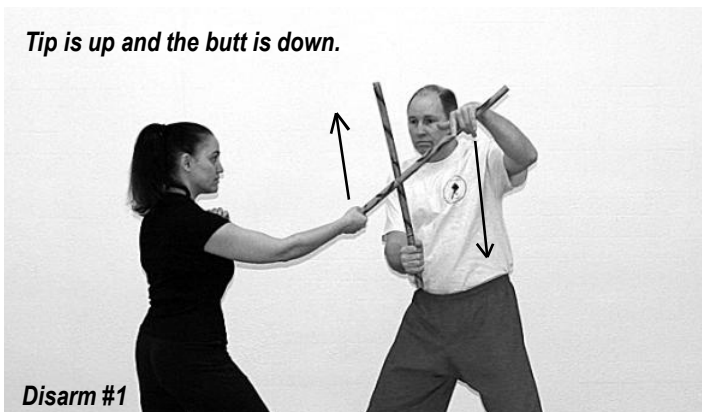


*Moving her hand across her center line weakens the grip.*

As you can tell from the preceding photos what I am doing is angling my partner's arm to one side or another. Stretching the arm helps to isolate the fingers of the grip hand. Once the arm is far enough over, your opponent's wrist has nowhere to go and the stress is now on the grip. From there you can peel or pry the cane out of the grip.



The next point of leveraging is that for the cane to come out of your opponent's hand effortlessly, the cane, in some way, must reverse positions. If you look at the original position of the tip and butt of the cane and see how they are reversed in the following examples, you will see what I mean.



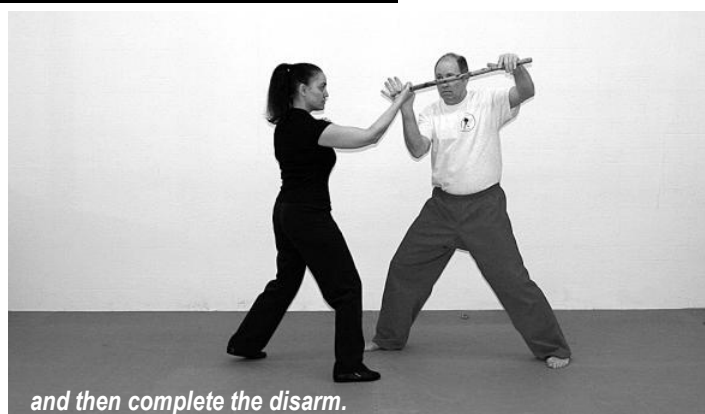
These preliminaries (angle stepping, repositioning their arm and reversing the cane position) together create one thing - the leveraging of your opponent's cane arm that makes the disarm effortless.

The following disarms are the standard ones taught in my school. The first 12 are from Modern Arnis and I altered some of them a bit in order to conform to the principles of leveraging. As an aside, these 12 disarms are templates for cane disarms. One can, with sufficient research, figure out how many strikes disarm #1 could apply to and so on. I will demonstrate both cane on cane disarms and empty hand disarms one page after the other to show the similarities of both.

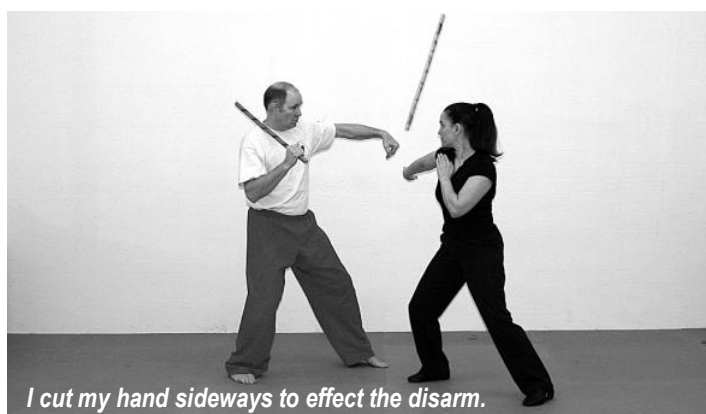




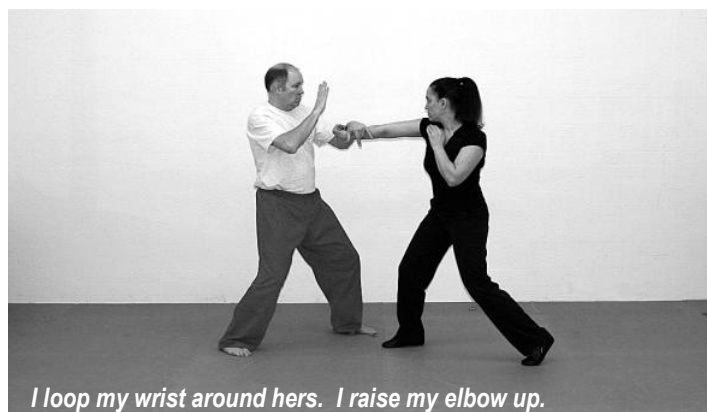
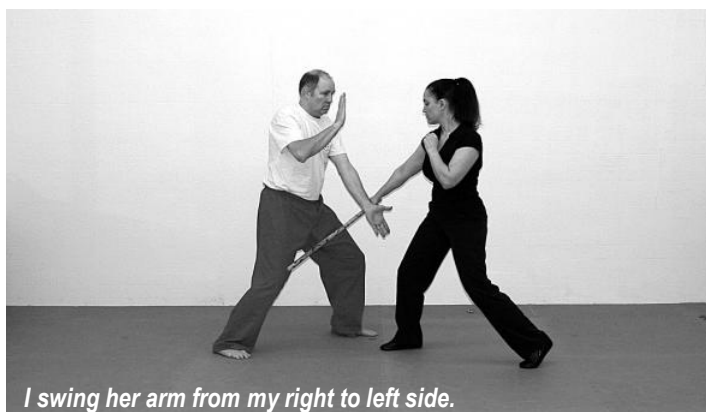
As the cane disarms shown are templates, the empty hand disarms can follow the same formats.



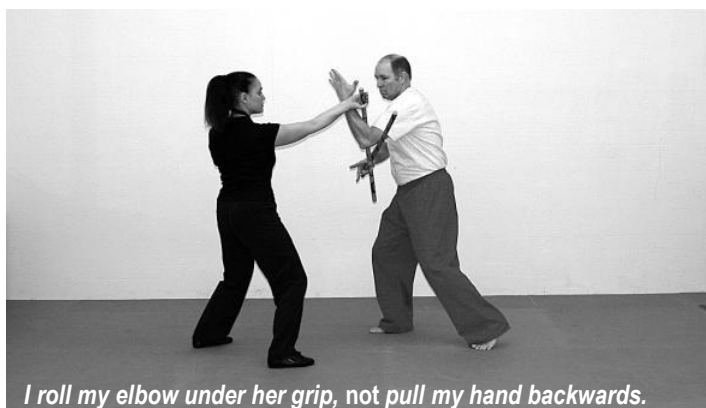
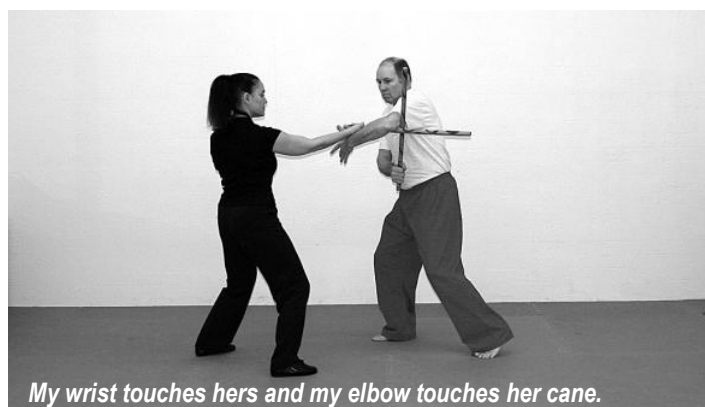
Cane disarms continued.



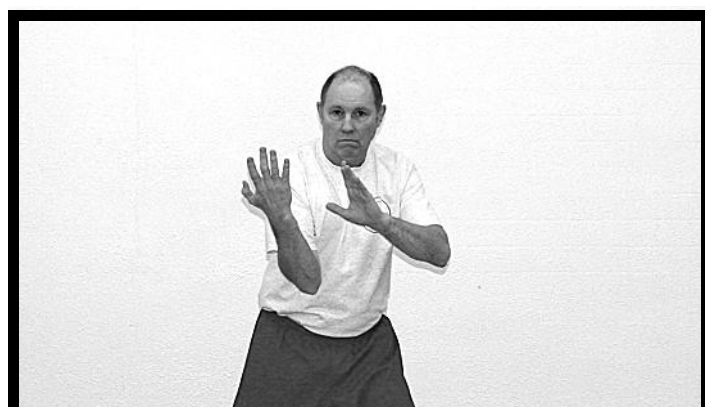
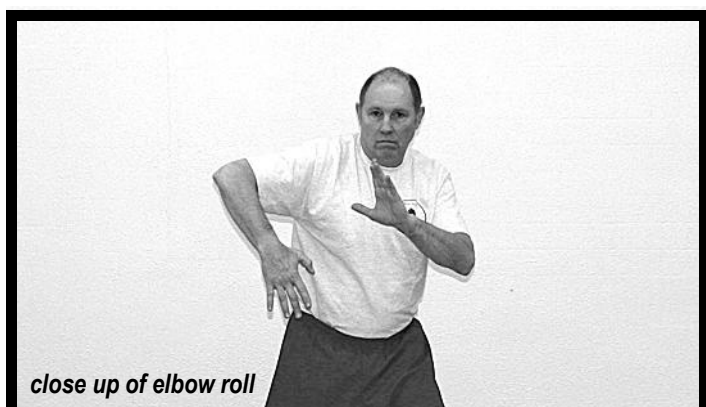
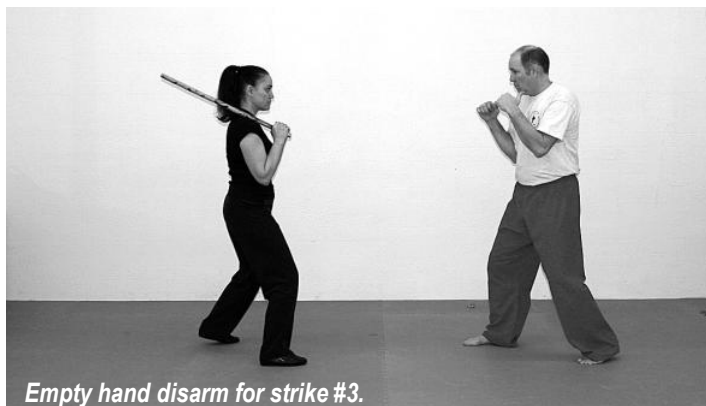
Cane disarms continued.



Cane disarms continued.

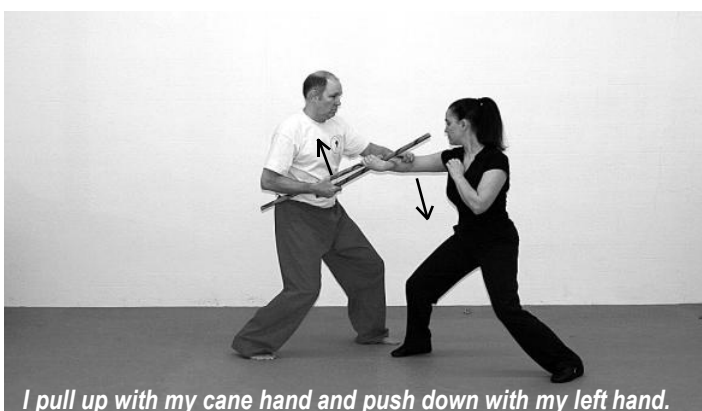
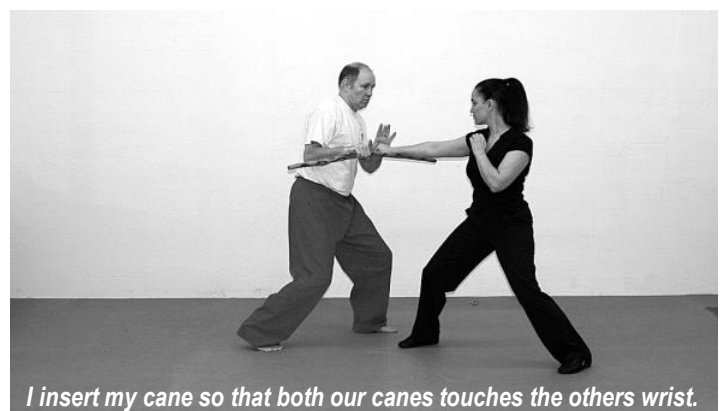
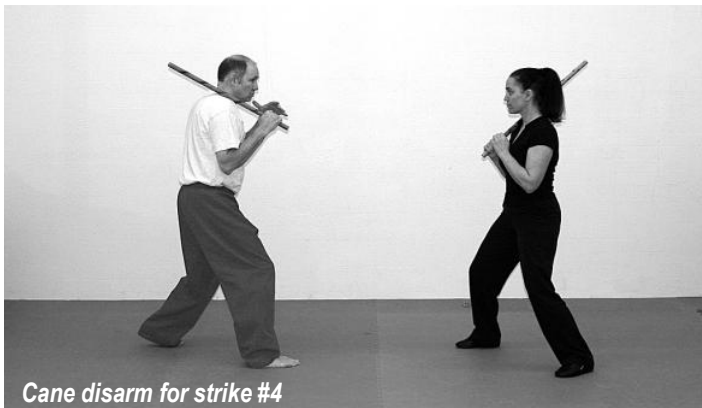


Cane disarms continued.



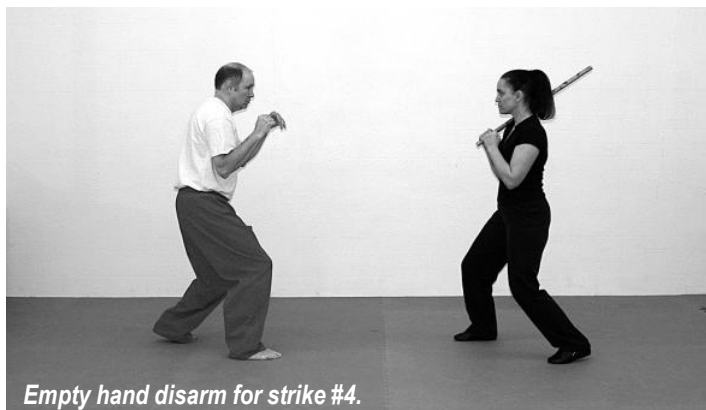


Cane disarms continued.





Cane disarms continued.



*Empty hand disarm for strike #4.*



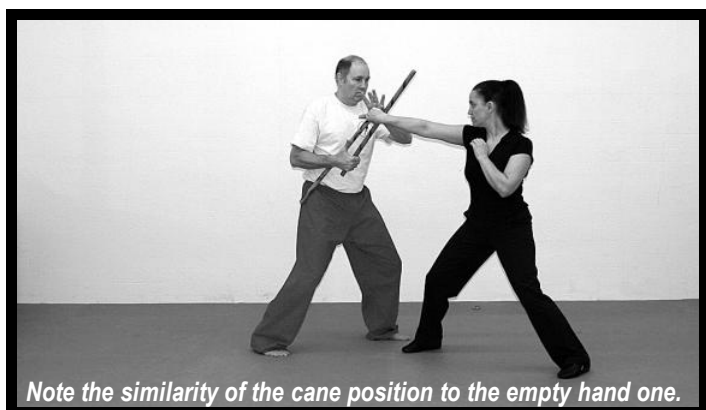
*I angle step in and block with both hands.*



*I insert my right wrist under her extended wrist.*



*I roll her wrist up until her cane is in an up-down position.*



*Note the similarity of the cane position to the empty hand one.*

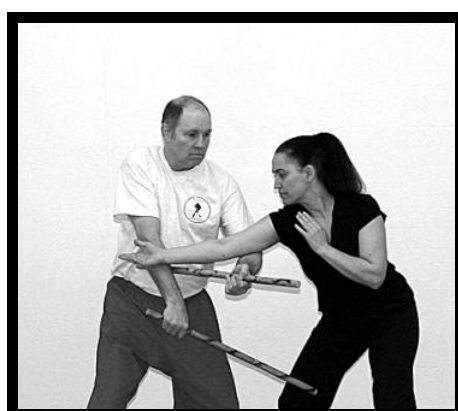
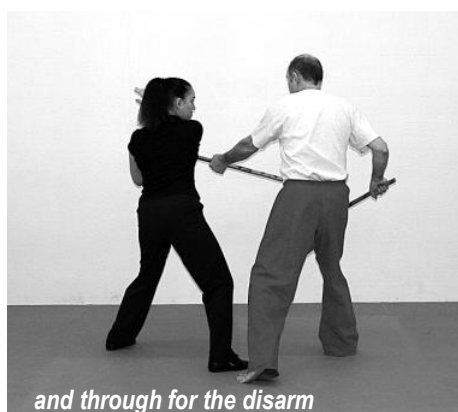
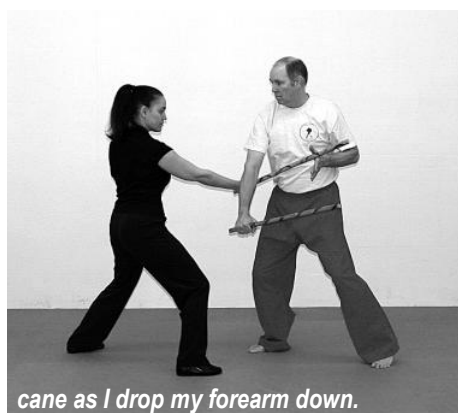
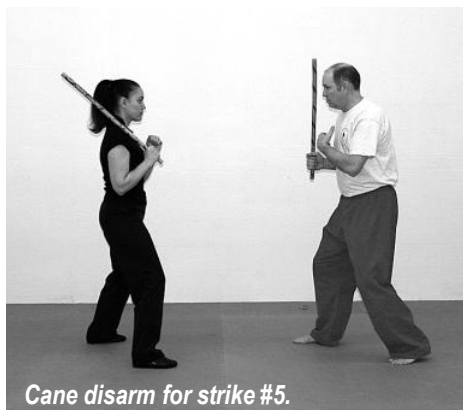


*Push down to effect the disarm.*

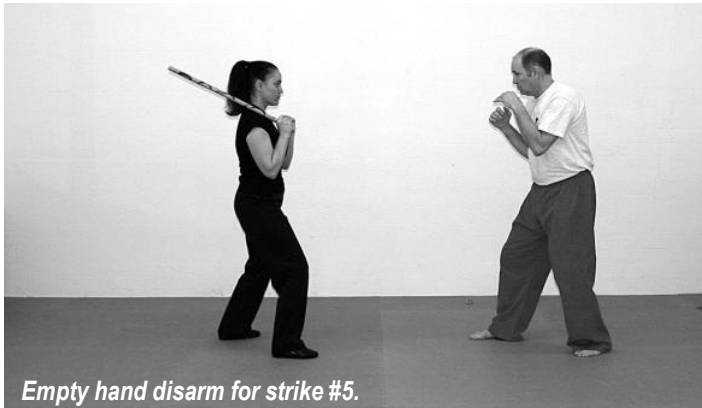


*I follow up palm strike for my safety.*

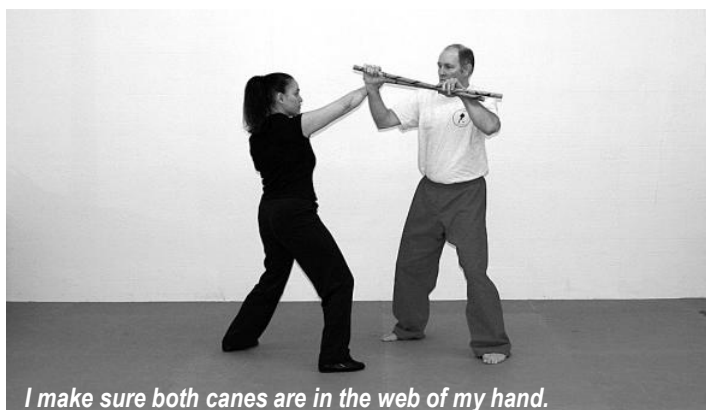
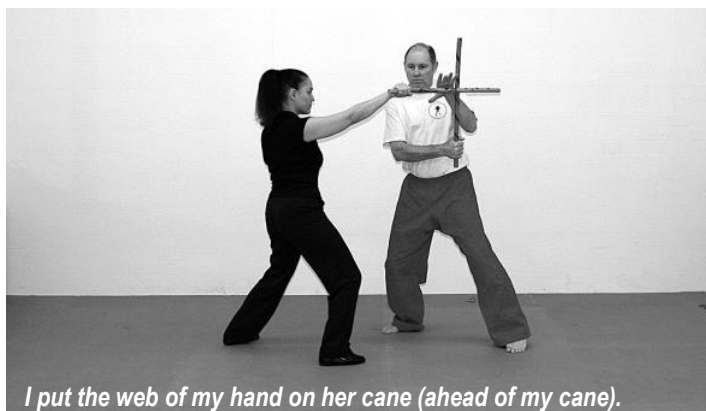
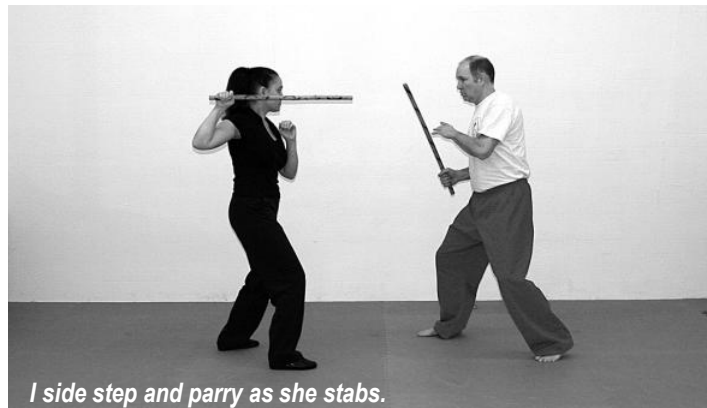
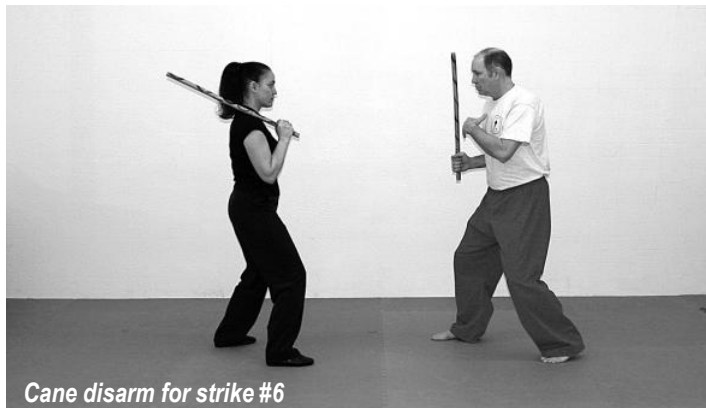
Cane disarms continued.



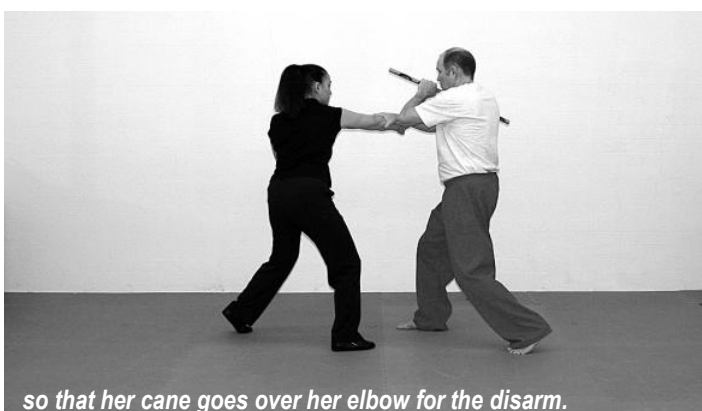
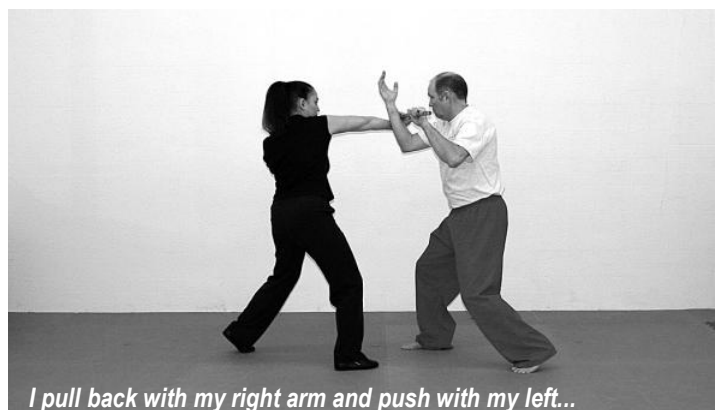
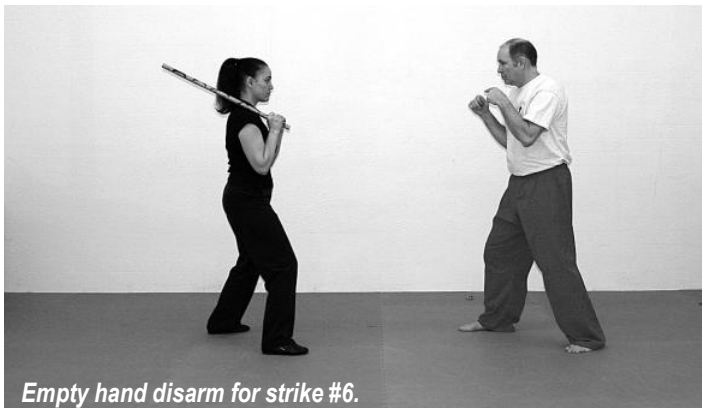
Cane disarms continued.



Cane disarms continued.



Cane disarms continued.

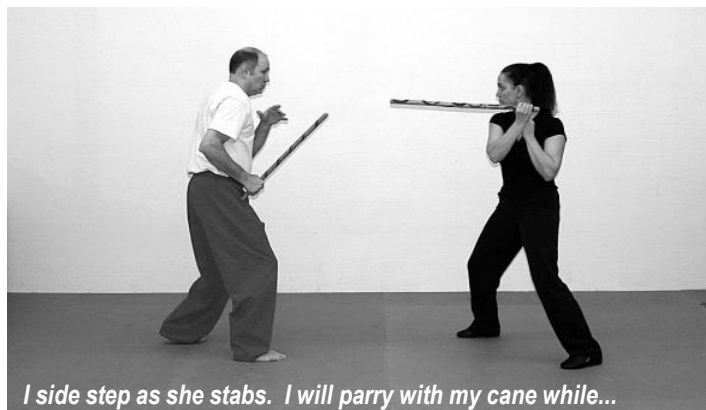




Cane disarms continued.



*Cane disarm for strike #7.*



*I side step as she stabs. I will parry with my cane while...*



*sliding my left hand under her cane.*



*Cutting upwards with my left hand, I follow through full circle.*



*As I do so, I turn my cane hand palm up for stability.*



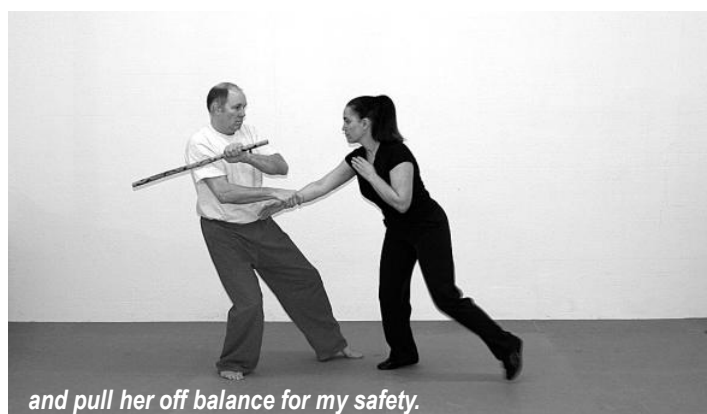
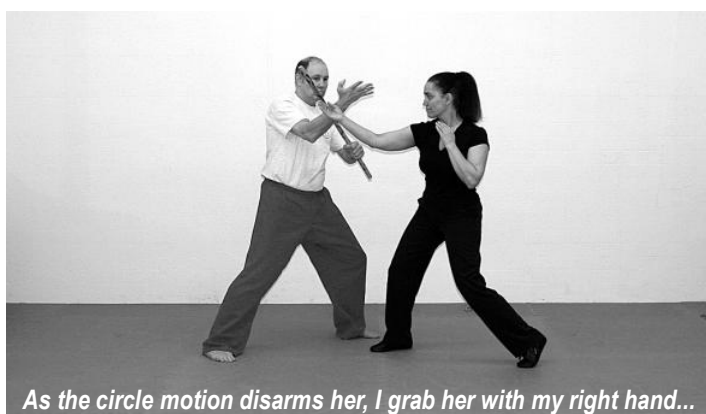
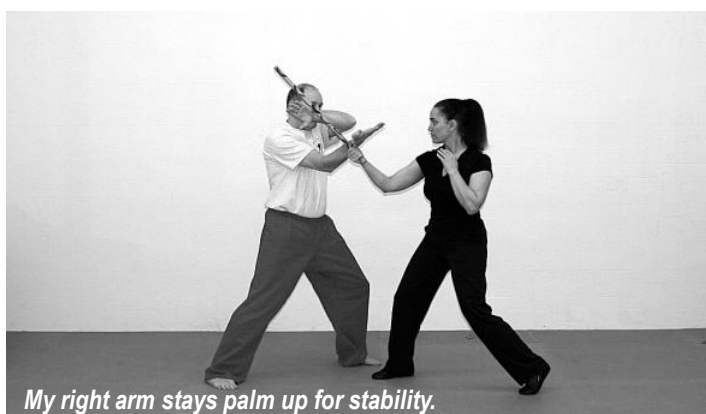
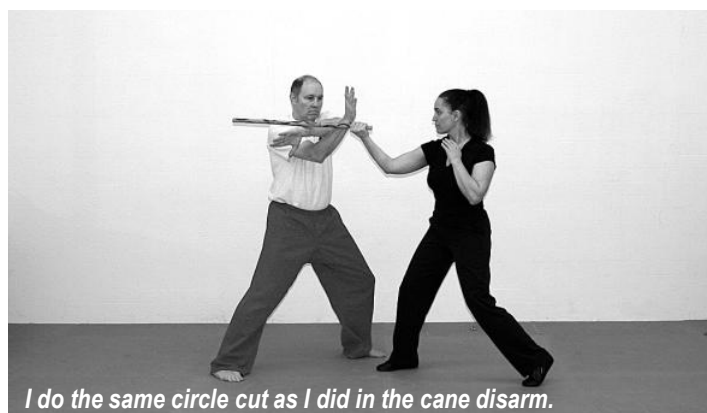
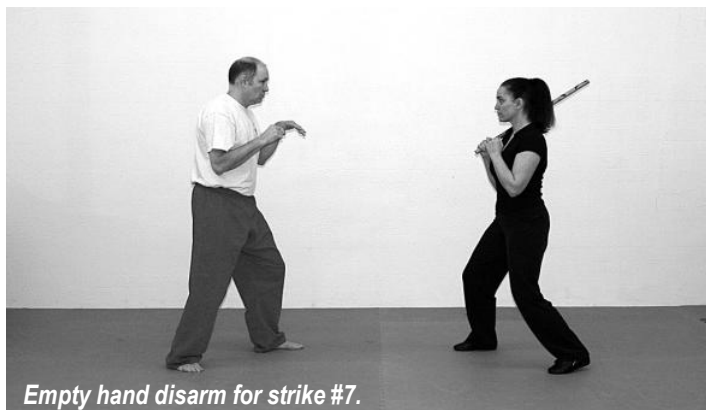
*I press down on her arm for my safety.*



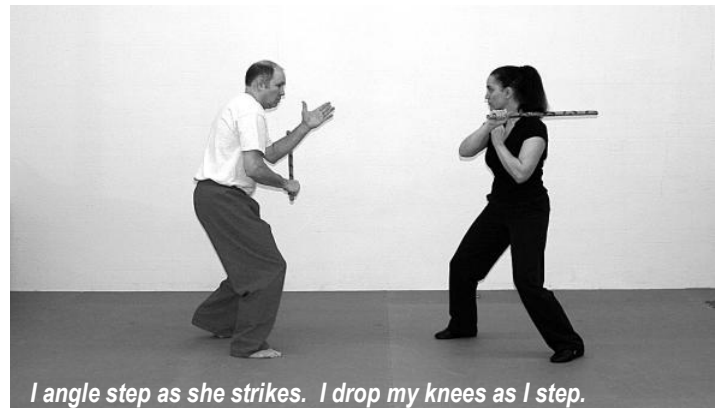
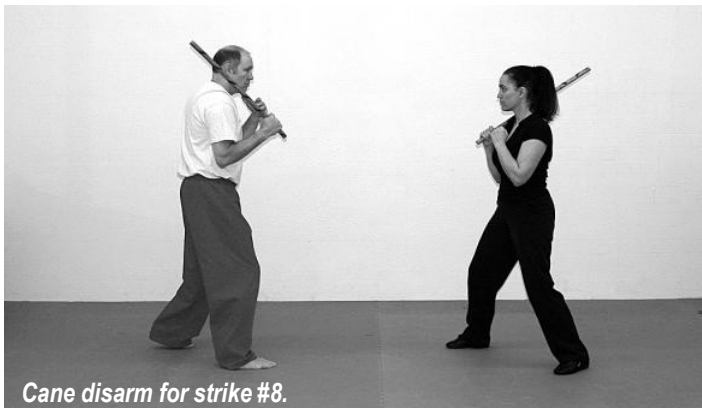
*My left hand comes under her grip, releasing the cane.*



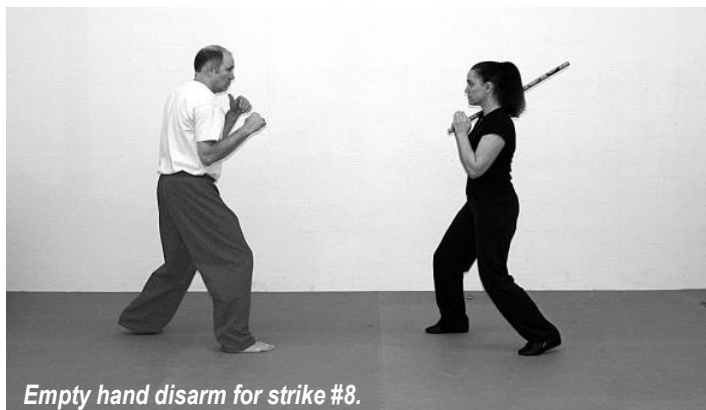
Cane disarms continued.



Cane disarms continued.



Cane disarms continued.



*Empty hand disarm for strike #8.*



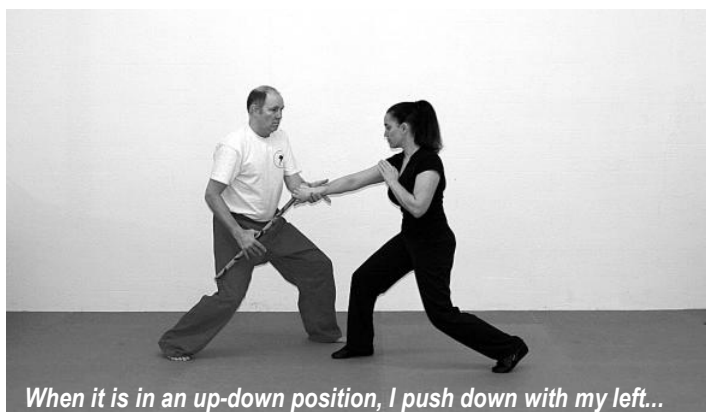
*I angle step as she strikes.*



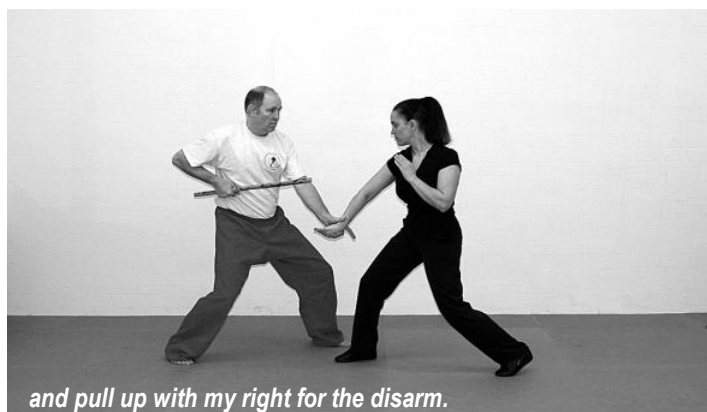
*I block her strike at her grip with both hands.*



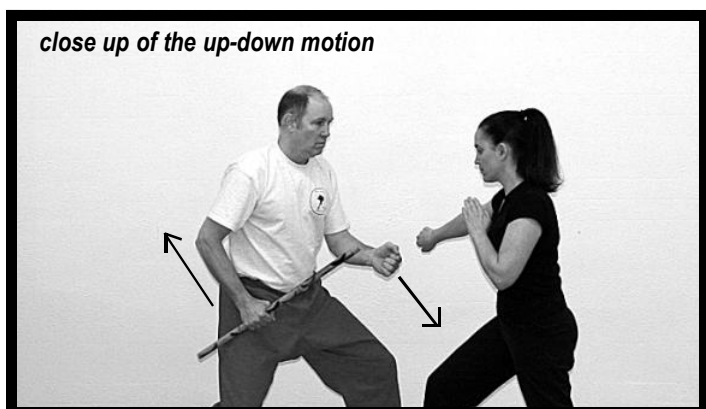
*I grab her wrist with my left and pivot her cane in her hand.*



*When it is in an up-down position, I push down with my left...*



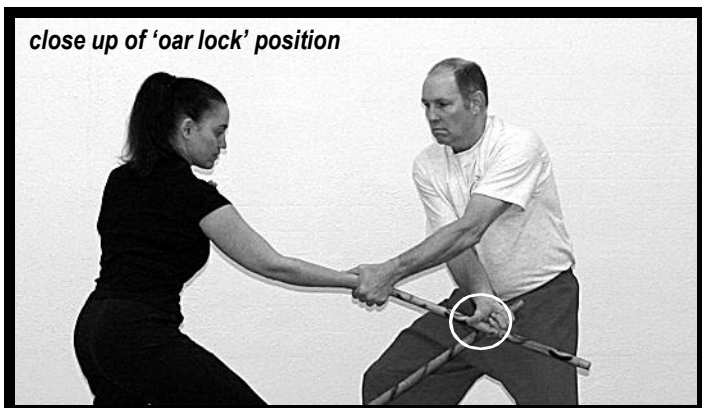
*and pull up with my right for the disarm.*



*close up of the up-down motion*



Cane disarms continued.

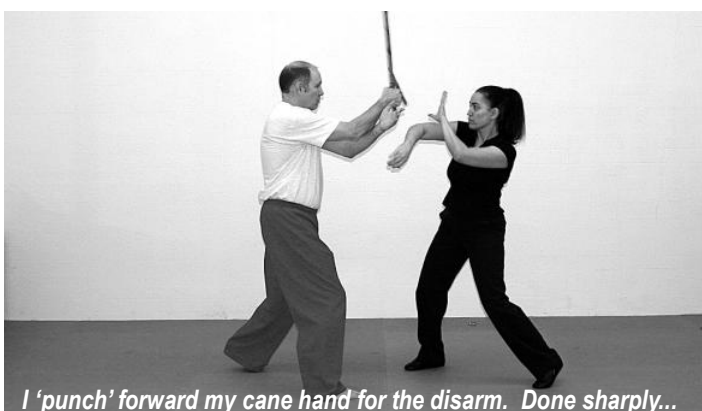
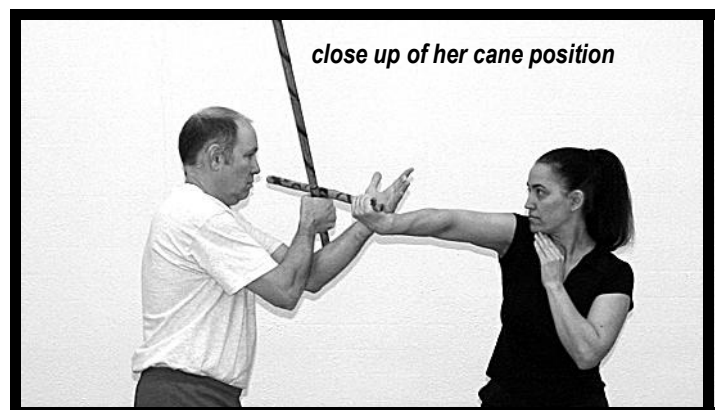
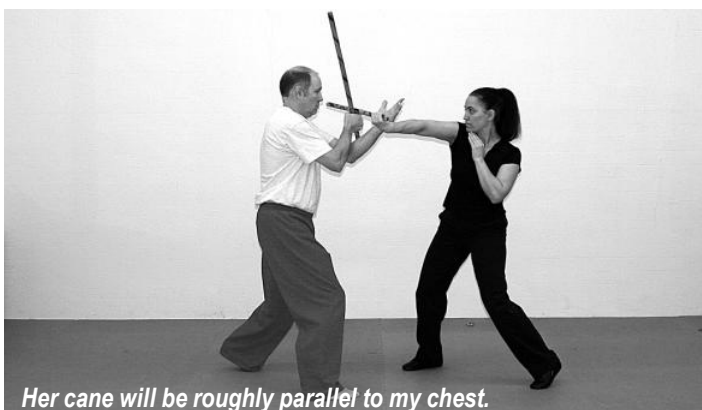
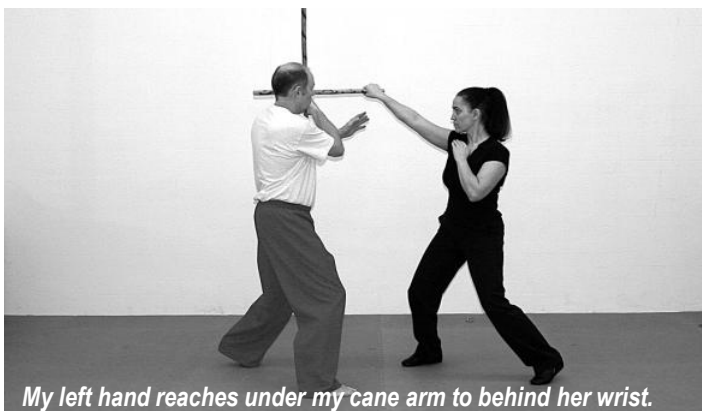


Cane disarms continued.



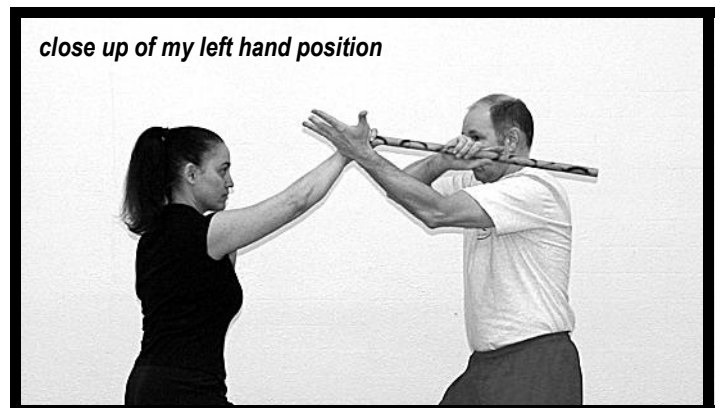
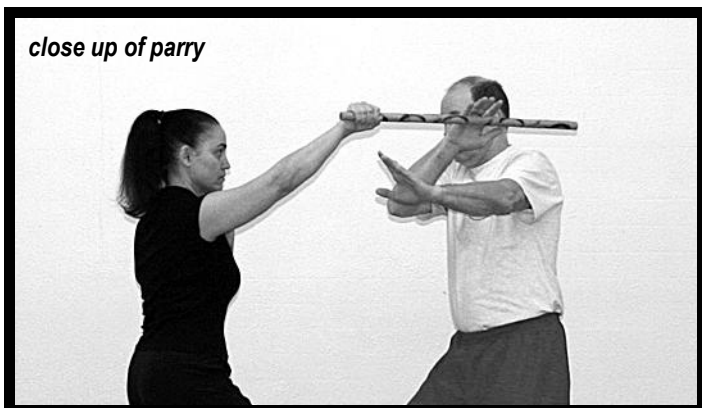


Cane disarms continued.

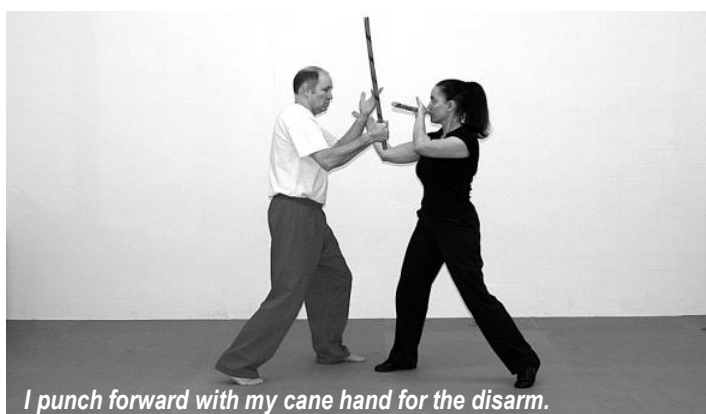
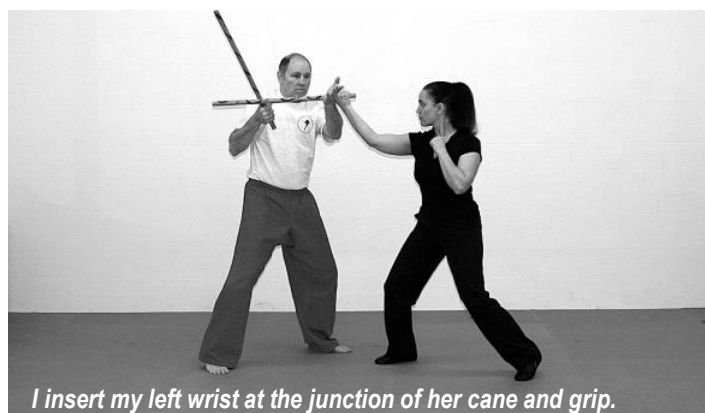
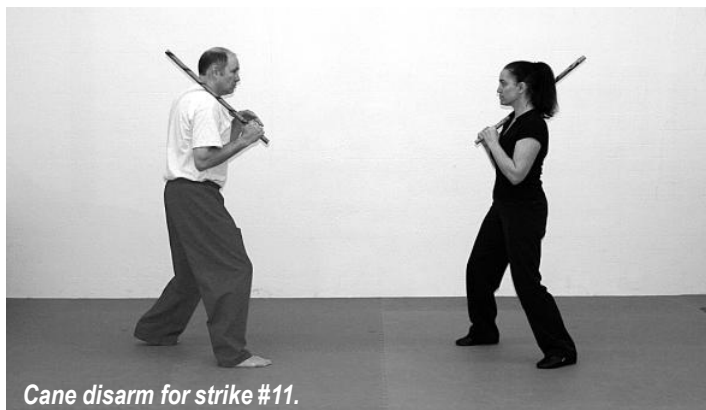




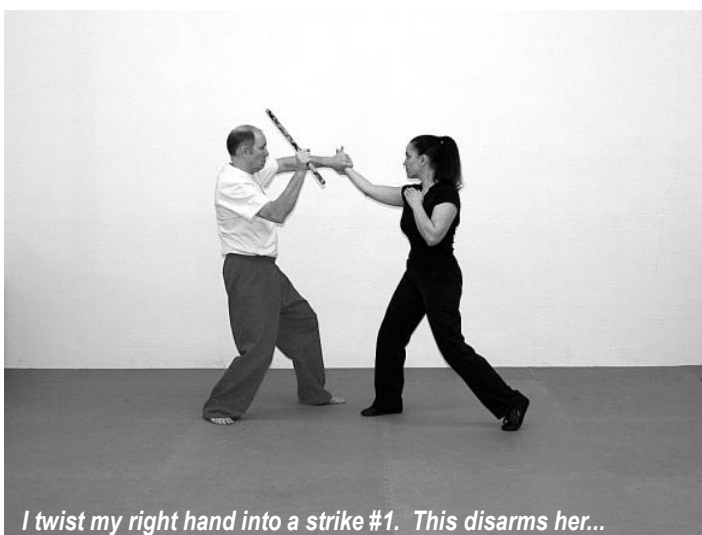
Cane disarms continued.



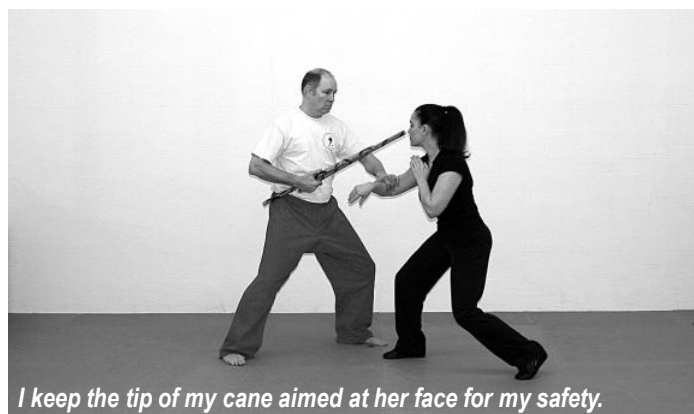
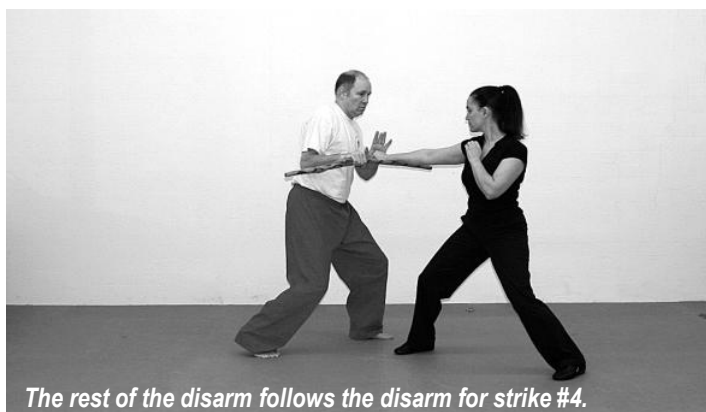
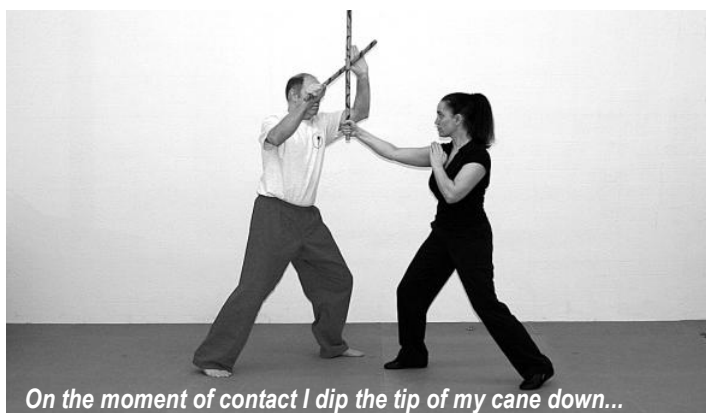
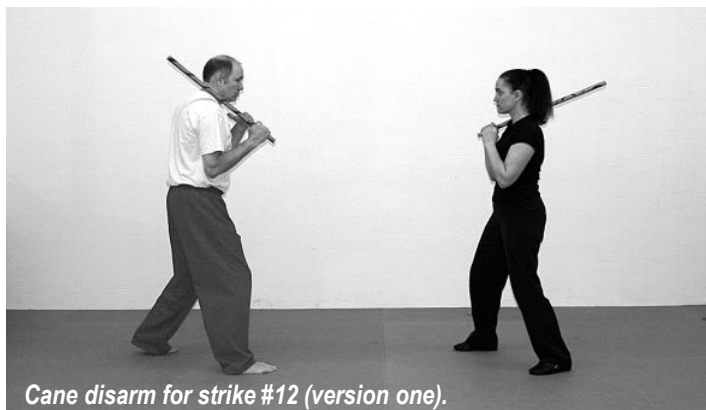
Cane disarms continued.



Cane disarms continued.



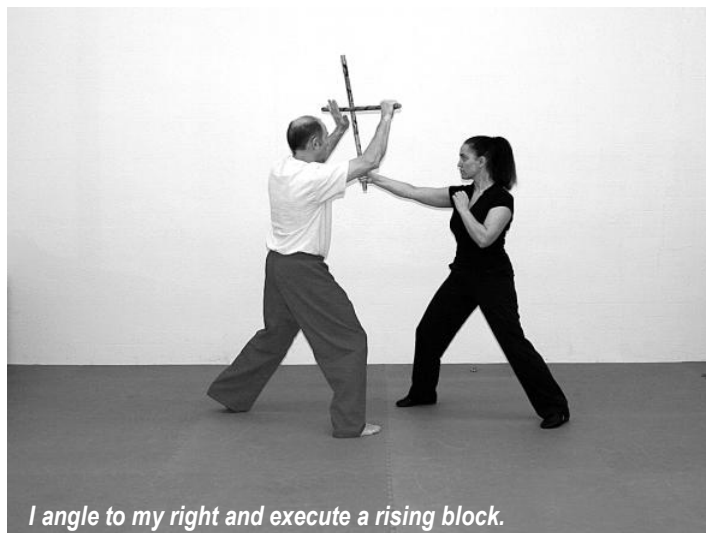
Cane disarms continued. Note: I teach three versions for disarm #12.



Cane disarms continued.



*Cane disarm for strike #12 (version two).*



*I angle to my right and execute a rising block.*



*On contact I slide the web of my left hand to her cane and...*



*drop my forearm to the junction of her cane and grip.*

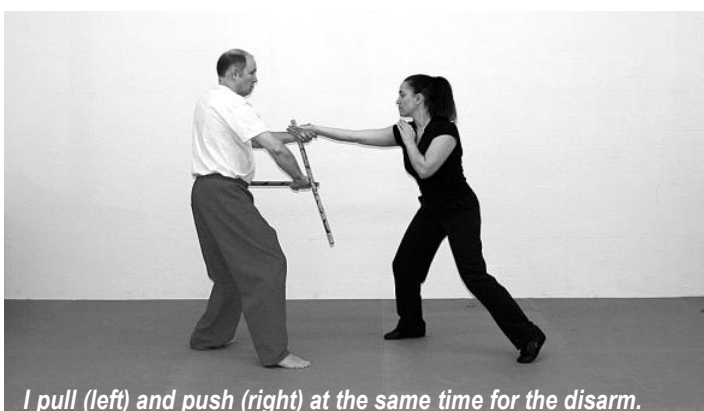
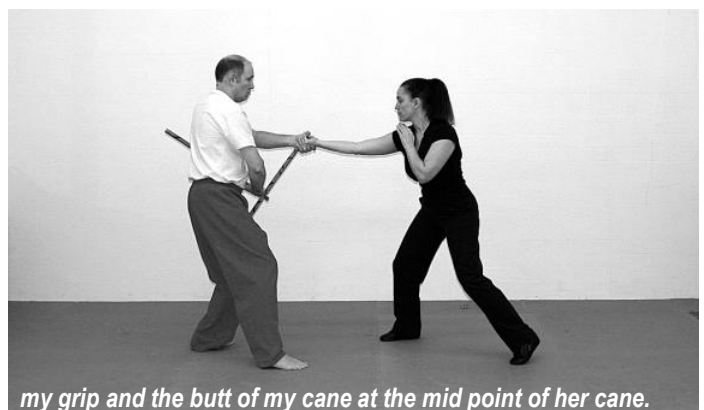
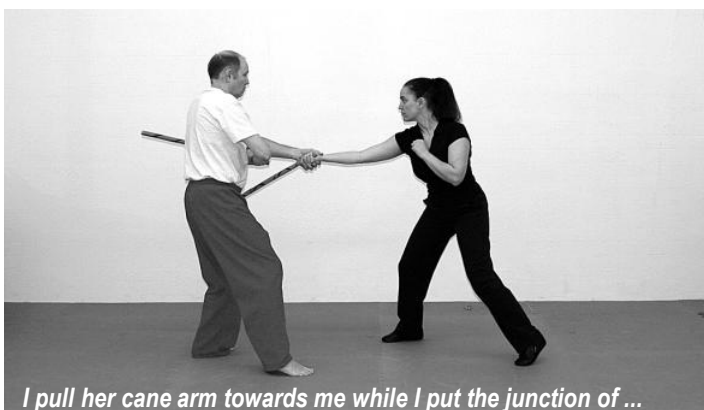
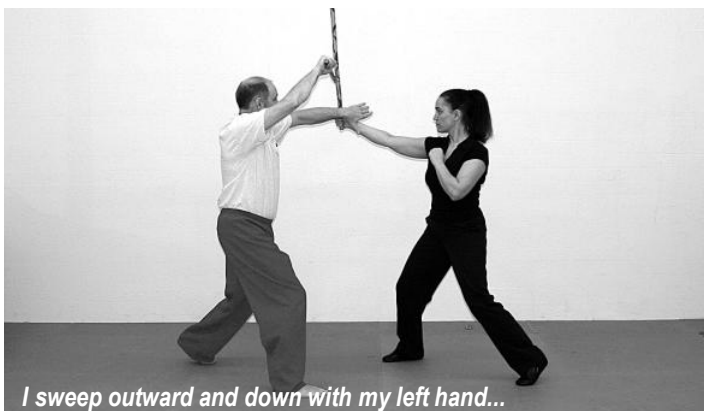
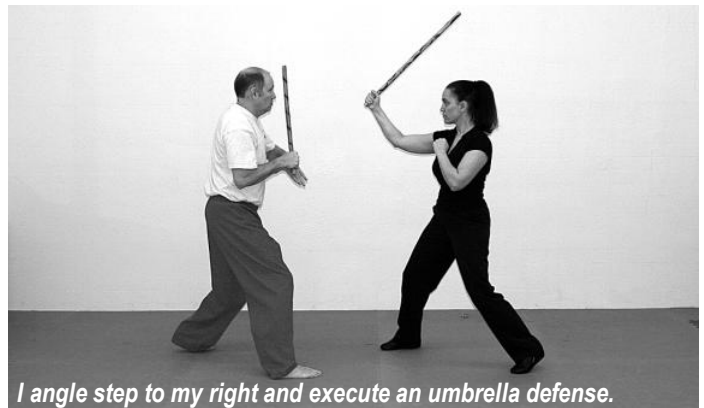


*The rest of the disarm follows as in disarm for strike #5.*



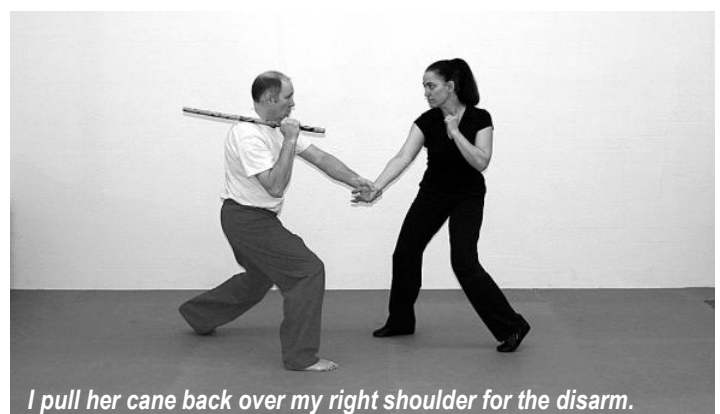
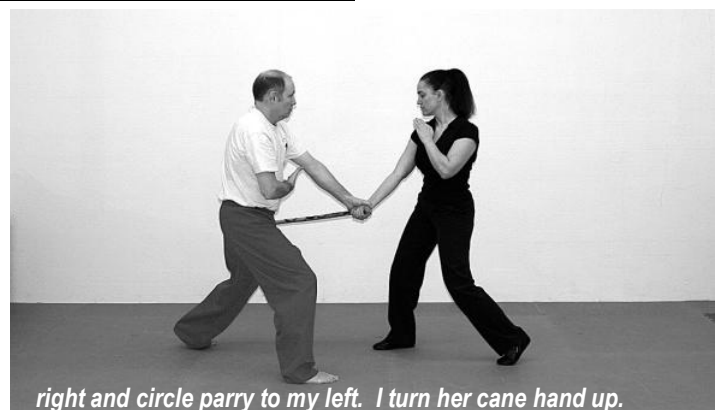
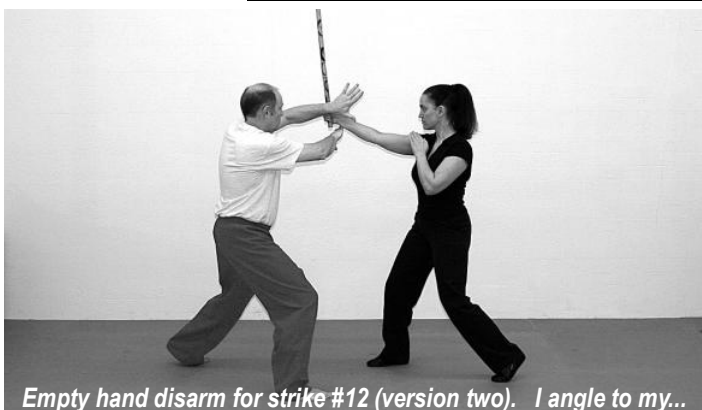
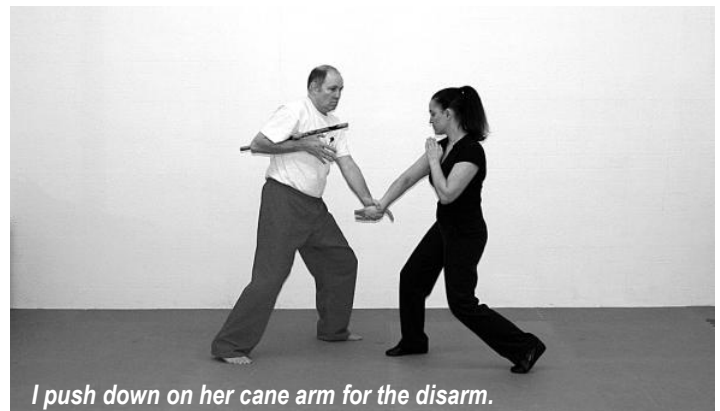
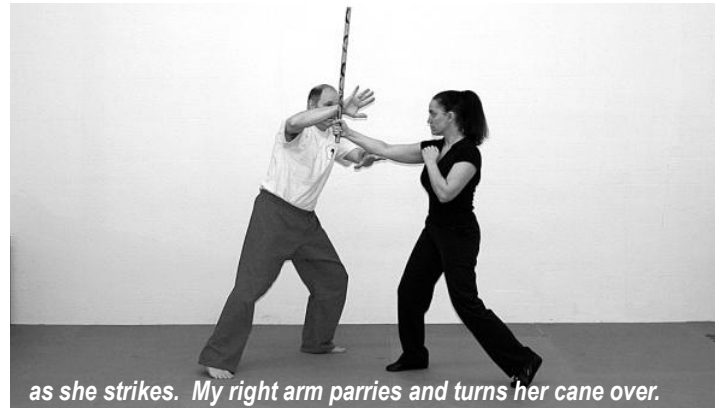


Cane disarms continued.

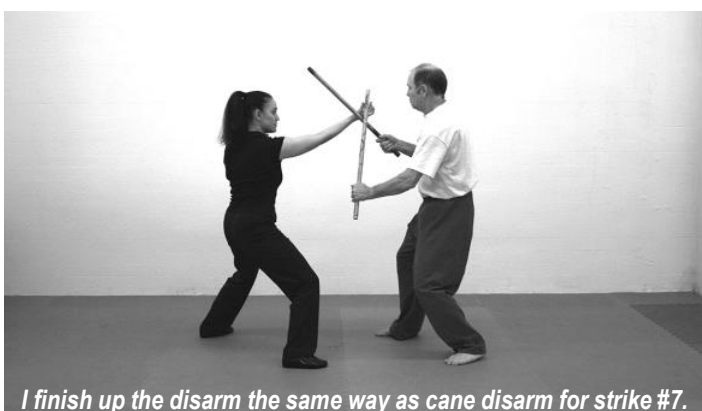




Cane disarms continued. Note: I teach two versions of empty hand disarm #12.



Cane disarms continued. Note: I teach two versions of cane disarm for strike #13.



Cane disarms continued.



Cane disarms continued.



In closing about disarms, if you go back over the photo illustrations you will see how the cane reverses position in each disarm. It doesn't matter if it is left to right, top to bottom, the cane reverses. You see also how the repositioning of their arm stretches it out so that you isolate the fingers and the cane peels out easily. If the disarm is not relatively effortless, there is something wrong in the set up. The hardest part about disarming your opponent is the capture. If your opponent is a 'slasher' or 'rebounder' it will be nearly impossible to capture a full speed strike. Here you are better off directly striking at their cane hand or some other target as your counter. 'Clean' disarming is best done against a power strike where your opponent is trying to take you out with one stroke. They are going for maximum impact and you have the best chance of capture then.

How one can best use leveraging with your joint locking is the same way as you do in cane disarming - move your opponent's arm off to one angle or another to minimize their natural strength position.



*Photos 1 & 3 show standard leveraging. Photos 2 & 4 show getting your opponent's arms out of natural alignment.*

Here is another example of leveraging to maximize efficiency. When you get your opponent out of alignment and break their structure, you can throw them easily.



*Kick Back Throw*



*Cross Over Heel Hook*



*Spiraling Head Throw*

I use a set up strike to go into leveraging as you will see on the next several pages . I have found that it is very difficult if you try to throw someone without any kind of set up at all.









*My partner punches at me.*



*I step in and parry...*



*and counter strike.*



*I put my right hand behind her head.*



*I pull down on her head while I lift up...*



*on her arm*



*I step back with my left leg.*



*I turn her head and arm like a steering...*



*wheel which spirals her body...*



*until she loses balance and falls down.*



You can see from the examples that Structure and Alignment play a huge part in leveraging. Leveraging is in EVERY body displacement action, disarm action, counter action and hitting action if at all possible. *(Photos from Germany below.)*



## INTEGRATED BODY ACTION

Integrated Body Action is a fancy term for using your entire body in your actions. This point was brought home to me early on in my arnis training. Being smaller than and not as strong as GM Remy, I immediately began to look for leveraging to aid me in my execution of techniques.

I was doing a series of seminars in the UK in 2005. I was given the book, *"Angry White Pajamas"*, by my friend Darren Davies. It was about English students who had done special training in aikido in Japan. There was this passage in it that amazed me. It was when Don King and Mike Tyson visited the main dojo and watched the master demonstrate Aikido. *'Don King and Tyson had come to see 'the real thing', a real martial arts magician, just like in the comics and movies back home, a tiny old man who could take out three or four people of Tyson's size at the same time. Kancho (Gozo Shioda - DA) had provided his usual amazing display. He threw people halfway across the dojo with effortless ease. When five teachers came at him wielding knives and swords he evaded the attack, ducking and chopping his attackers in the neck as they fell like skittles about him. King agreed it was, indeed, the real thing. Tyson remarked, "It's all in the knees, isn't it?" which was remarkably perspicuous for a first time view of Aikido.'* (underscore mine - DA, 'perspicuous' def. *clearly expressed and therefore easily understood* - Encarta Dictionary) Wow! This is what I had been doing without realizing it. I base a lot of my movement off of the knees. I spotted myself doing this in some recent video footage taken of me teaching.

Later on I read another book titled, *'Nei Jia Qua'*. The editor, Jess O'Brien conducted interviews with many practitioners and masters of various internal martial arts. I read this description/definition of internal martial arts by Tim Cartmell. *'Internal martial arts have a certain kind of body use, a certain kind of alignment, specific ways you develop power and use it in application. In a nutshell, what we call "internal" here means that you don't use force directly against force. The idea is to use your whole body power against the opponent's more vulnerable angles and weaknesses'* When I read that I realized he articulated perfectly that this is what I have been doing with MA-80. I had been integrating my body into my arnis applications. I believe this is where the addition of the baguazhang training came into play. The continual stress on structure and centering had permeated my arnis and karate practice.

What it has to do with FMA is that there are practitioners who only rely on the hardness of the weapon to create its impact. This is a major mistake as there can be many factors in play during a combat situation. If you read accounts of actual FMA combat duels, they are measured in seconds. They are over in seconds and moments, not minutes or rounds. Maximum impact in your strike will settle things very fast. Using your arm (or what I call segmenting) will lessen the impact power of the blow. Here is a real life example of what I mean.

I pulled into a gas station one night about midnight. While I was waiting I saw this woman police officer quite angrily yelling at someone in the car ahead of me. I found out later that he was the neighborhood drug dealer. She was going from the driver side to the passenger side and back again. Then she took out her baton and began to beat in the windows. She took out both windows in short order and the driver came out. He ran around to the trunk, stopped and opened it. She came up to him and did the most amazing thing. She swung down upon his head with her baton. As she did it she pulled her body slightly back totally negating any power she could've gotten from the blow. It hit him in the head and all that happened was that he yelled and took off around the car. He stopped again at the trunk whereupon she hit him again. This time he brought his arm up and took the blow there. She again pulled her body back and again took away any force the baton might have brought to bear. This time the guy took off running. I sat there amazed. Both times she totally killed the force of her blow by moving her body away from the strike instead of hitting into it. It didn't matter how hard the baton was. She negated it.

Below is shown exactly how she negated the power of her strike.



This is doing the exact opposite of what I'm talking about using integrated body action. How I teach delivering power strikes is by using the entire body. I synchronize my body action so that I drop my knees in order to power the strike using full body action. A brief demonstration of what I mean is shown below. I will also illustrate four power developing sequences I teach in my school. The first sequence (shown on next page) I learned from World Champion Graciella Casillas.



You'll notice that on both of the examples above I drop my knees in preparation for the counter strike. From there I can use my entire body to deliver a powerful counter blow.

Power development sequence #1 - Four strikes using double rotation.





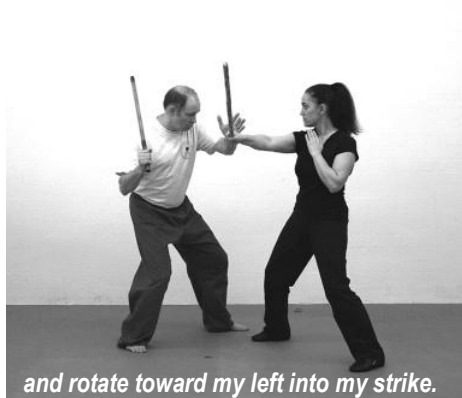
Power development sequence #2 - Four strikes using double rotation.



Power development sequence #3 - Three strikes rotating in the same direction (towards my right).



Power development sequence #4 - Three strikes rotating in the same direction (towards my left).



Another drill I use to develop this is after I teach how to generate power in one's strike *and* recoil options (detailed later in the book) is what I call 'Block – Immediate Go'. In this drill I introduce what I call 'half strikes'. The 'half' is in the degree of elbow bend prior to striking. The elbow is bent at no more than a 90 degree angle. As you will see from the following pictures, the only way one could get power into their counter strike is to integrate the entire body into the strike. In this drill you don't load up after the block. You counter strike right from block position. This will be only a 'dink' hit unless you utilize the entire body.



*Example of 90 degree angle bend of the arm with strike #1.*

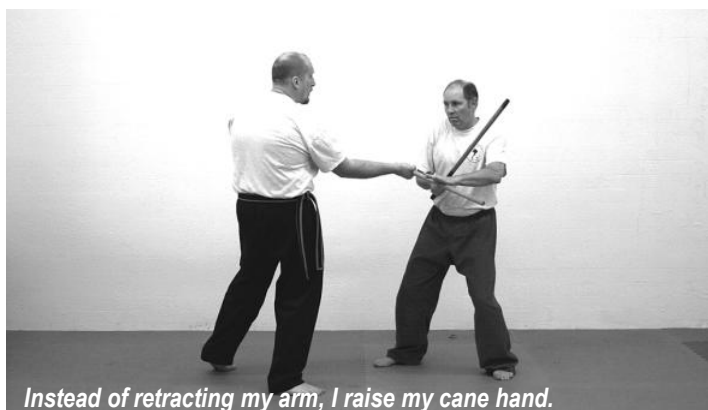


*Example of 90 degree angle bend of the arm with strike #2.*

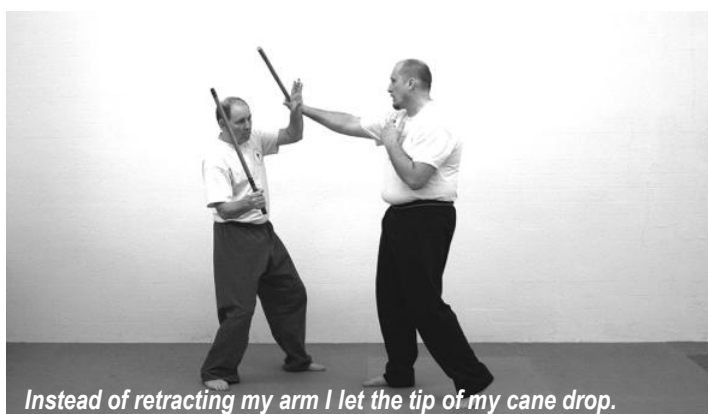


*Example of full arm swing with strike #3.*

Examples of Block - Immediate Go



Examples of Block - Immediate Go continued.

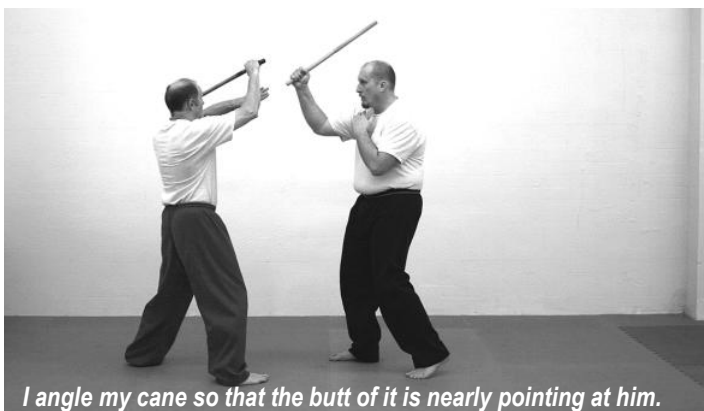




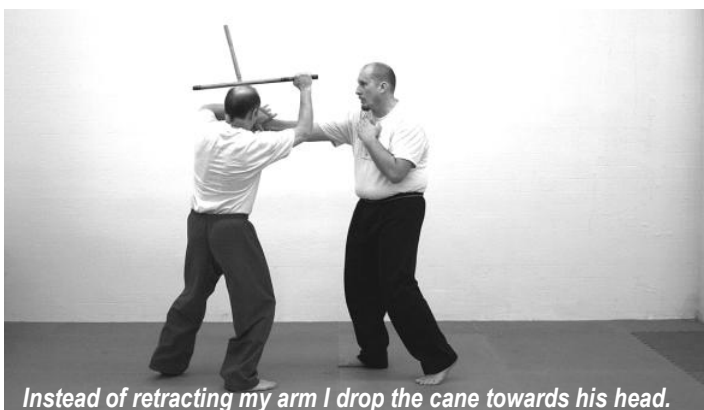
Examples of Block - Immediate Go continued.



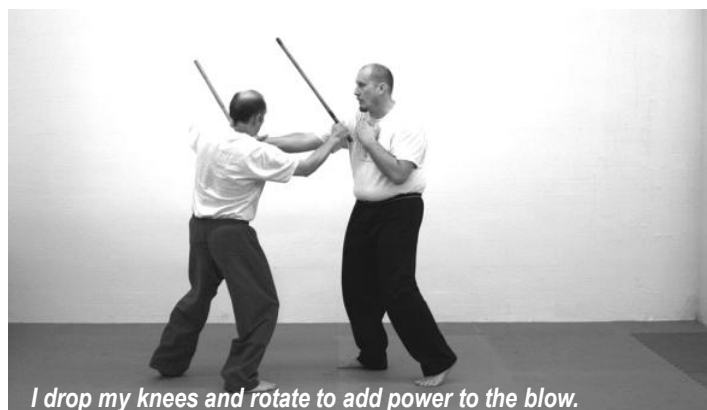
Examples of Block - Immediate Go continued.



*I angle my cane so that the butt of it is nearly pointing at him.*



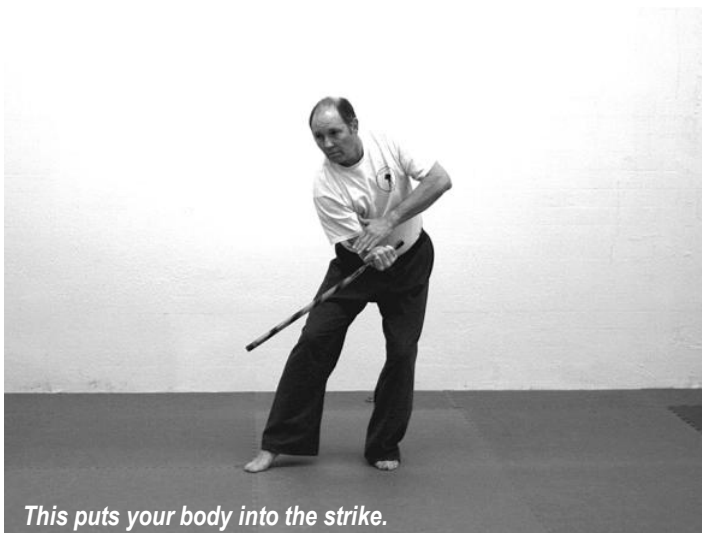
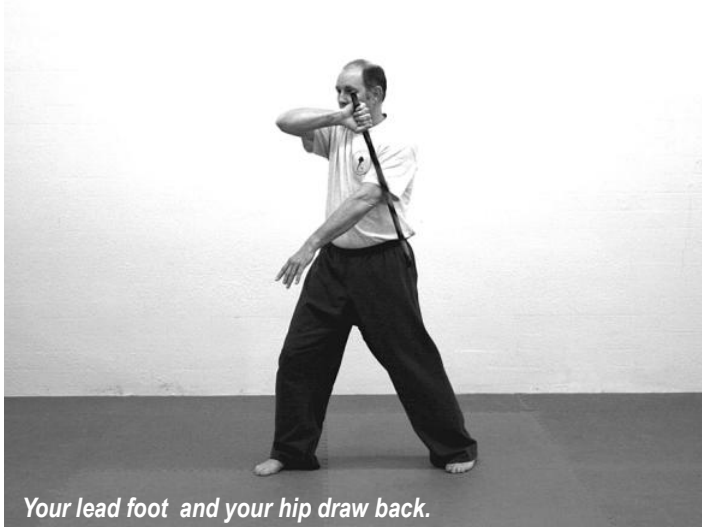
*Instead of retracting my arm I drop the cane towards his head.*



*I drop my knees and rotate to add power to the blow.*



Here is where you can use integrated body action with the abanico strike. Usually the abanico is a speed blow intending to distract or shock. This method I learned from GM Rene Tongson is the Abanico Tres Puntas delivery and you use full body action in it.



*As I begin the strike my lead foot slides back in towards my other foot. In conjunction with the foot sliding my hip tucks back which leads to my lead shoulder coming forward. In this way I can deliver a power blow with the forward abanico strike.*

For me, much of integrated body action is based in the lower body. *It's all in the knees, isn't it.* Integrating ones body will ensure that you get the maximum amount of energy into whatever action you do.

Integrated body action with the Tres Puntas forward abanico strike.



*My partner strikes at me with a #1 strike.*



*I block and cut through to prepare for the abanico counter.*



*I roll my rear hip back as I begin my counter strike.*



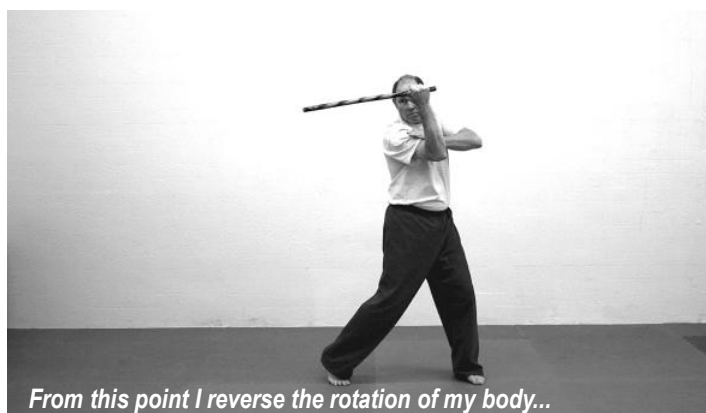
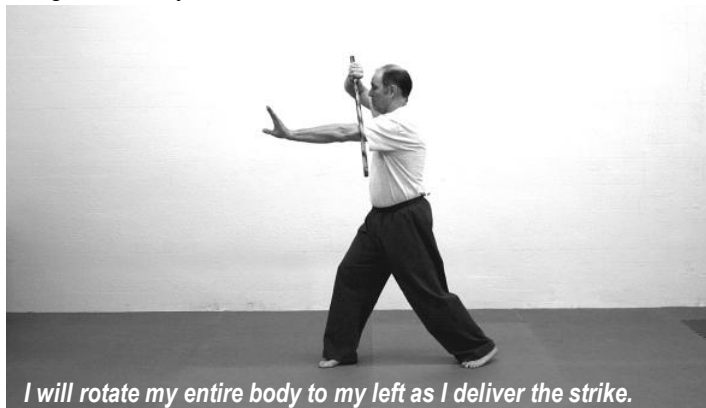
*My lead foot comes back as my lead shoulder goes forward.*



*My whole body action goes into a power form of abanico.*



Integrated body action with the Tres Puntas overhead abanico strike.



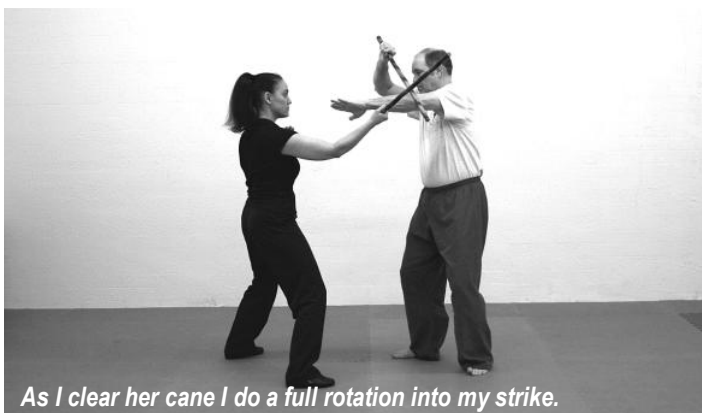
Integrated body action with the Tres Puntas overhead abanico strike.



*My partner strikes at me with a #1 strike.*



*I raise my check hand to clear her strike and guard with my cane.*



*As I clear her cane I do a full rotation into my strike.*



*Upon contact I rotate in the opposite direction...*



*push her to off balance her...*



*while my follow up strike connects.*





Whenever I execute a throw or takedown of any kind, I use my whole body in the action. I find that isolating or segmenting the body increases the possibility of failure greatly. Notice how the solo action of the diving throw mirrors the partner execution.



One can use integrated body action in joint locking as well as throwing. Again, the use of integrated body action will ensure the success of your locking action.



Using integrated body action in joint locking - knuckle rub.



*My partner strikes at me with a #12 strike.*



*I step in with my left leg and her strike slides down my right arm.*



*I turn and step to my right rear side as I capture her arm.*



*I position my left hand above her elbow.*



*I ball up my left hand into a fist. My 'door knock' knuckles...*



*go into the muscle insertion right above her elbow.*



*I drop my knees and rotate as I apply pressure to her arm.*



Using integrated body action in joint locking - forearm bar.



*My partner strikes at me with a #2 strike.*



*I check her hand with my right hand as I step in with my left.*



*I capture her wrist and place my left forearm on her elbow.*



*I pull her arm close to my body and begin to drop my knees.*



*I add rotation to the body drop for added power.*



This photo shows a simple example of Integrated Body Action. I pull his arm down, rotate and strike at the same time.



## AMBIDEXTERITY

I divide up Ambidexterity into three sub categories: A. Check Hand Usage & Options, B. Double Weapons Usage and C. Cross Hand Training. This chapter will be rather extensive due to the lack of written material on the subject. I'll start with the check hand. In FMA the check hand is very important. Guro Dan Inosanto calls it the 'alive hand.' My teacher, Manong Ted Buot calls it 'the quarterback' because it sets up the cane hand. Some systems say it is more important than the weapons hand. For simplicity's sake I have three check hand positions: *(photos taken from a 2008 Florida seminar)*

- Parallel check – both hands 'side by side'
- Cross check – one hand crossing over the other
- Scissors check – the check hand moving in the opposite direction of the cane





The two key reasons for the different positions are:

1. To not get caught up in using only one as a continual habit and
2. You never know where your hand is going to end up so it is good to become familiar with any and all positions.

Here are some introductory sequences for each of the checking types.

Parallel check.



Parallel check



Cross check



Cross check



Scissors check.



Scissors check.





Scissors check.



Scissors check.



I use what I call coordinated action when I block and check. What I learned was on a 'three beat', block - check - counter. 1-2-3. The block, check and counter were separate actions, one following the next. This is what I call 'independent action.' First one hand moves, then the next and then the next and so on. The block - check - counter was taught in that fashion.



When I first got together with Manong Ted, he constantly caught me on my three beat habit. He used coordinated action, both hands moving at the same time. I have modified what I do to include that. The key is to block and check, or position the check hand at the same time as the cane action, not after it. This gives me a half or full beat ahead of my partner in my counter.





The check hand is used for far more than merely checking the opponent's arm. It is quite an offensive and defensive weapon. You can use it to:

- Check the opponent's cane or cane hand/arm
- Grab the opponent's cane or cane arm
- Pass his cane from one side of the body to the other
- To joint lock your opponent
- To disarm your opponent
- To block his cane arm with it
- To counter strike with it



*Checking the cane*



*Checking the cane arm*

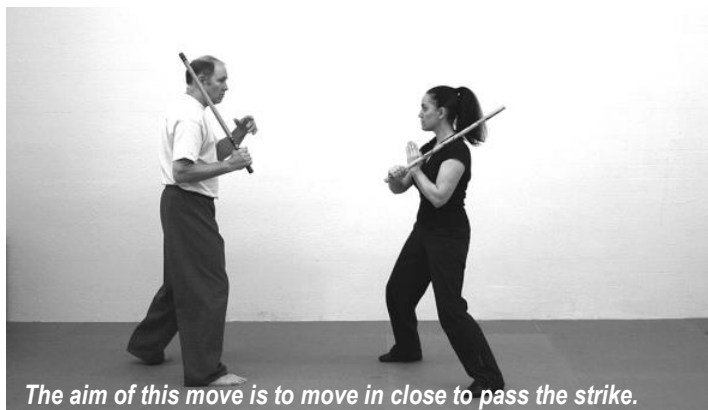


*Grabbing the cane*

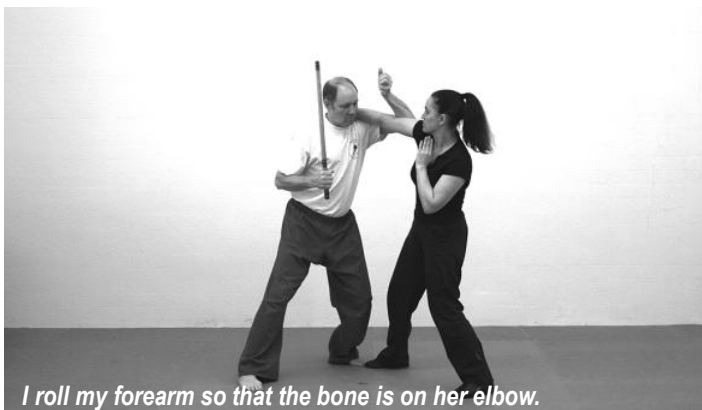


*Grabbing the cane arm*

Check hand options - passing the cane from one side of the body to the other.



Check hand options - joint locking with the check hand.





Check hand options - disarming with the check hand.



Check hand options - blocking with the check hand.



Check hand options - counter striking with the check hand.



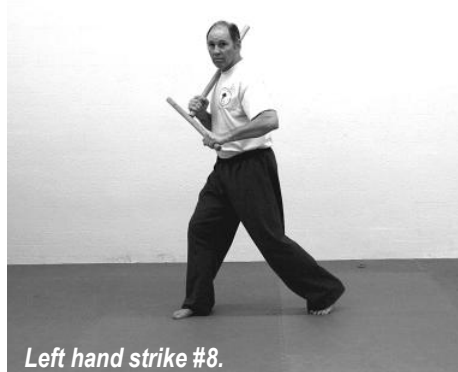
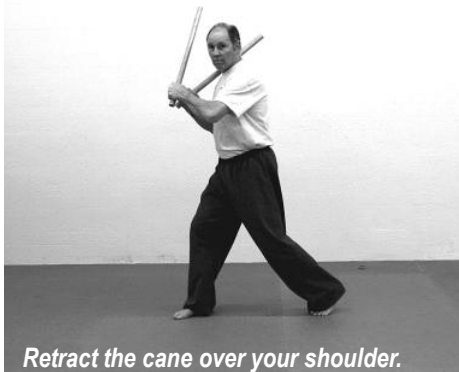
This is a good drill. You block with either the cane or check hand but you counter strike with your check hand only.



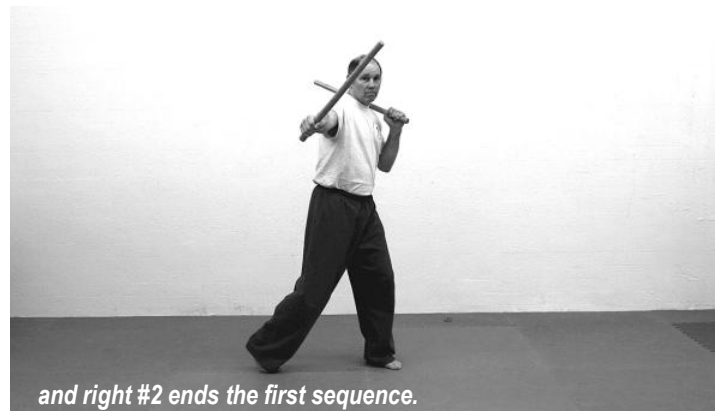
A saying my teacher GM Remy always told me was, *'Danny, do not become hypnotized by the stick.'* I use this as a reminder to keep the check hand always in play. I tell my students to watch out because *'Lefty might want to come out and play'* (hitting them in the face as I say this). This keeps them awake and alert.

Every school of FMA deals with the use of two weapons to some degree. There are usually *doble baston* (double cane), *baston y daga* (stick & dagger) and *espada y daga* (sword & dagger).

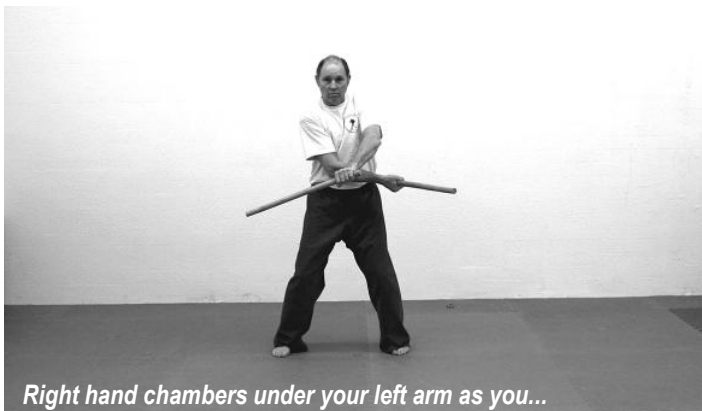
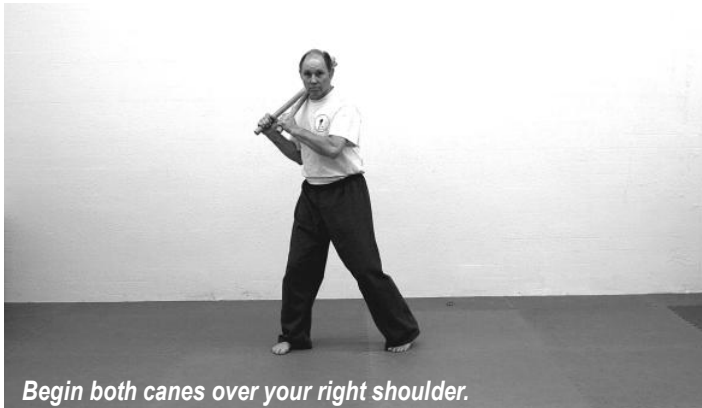
Doble baston is the use of two similar sized sticks for your combat. The advantage of this is that you have two impact weapons for your use and the drawback is that you do not have a check hand for skilled manipulations. There are several drills that are good for coordination regarding the doble baston called *sinawali*. Sinawali comes from the term sawali, which means 'to weave'. The first of the three basic Sinawali patterns, Single Sinawali, is shown below.



Sinawali patterns - Double Sinawali

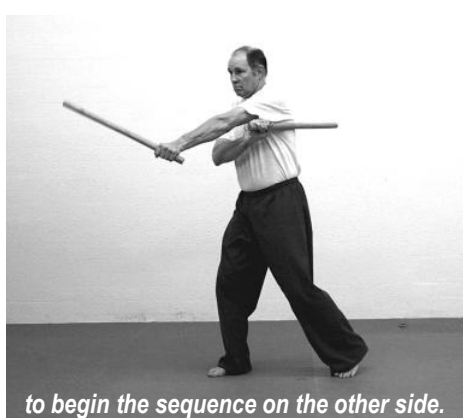
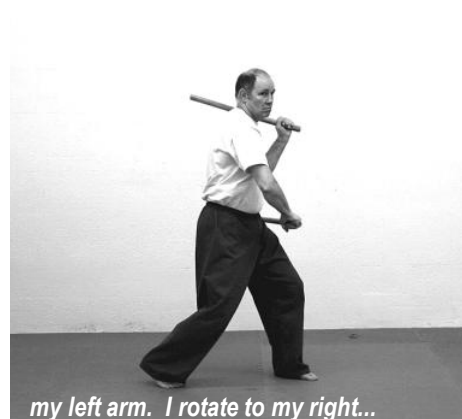
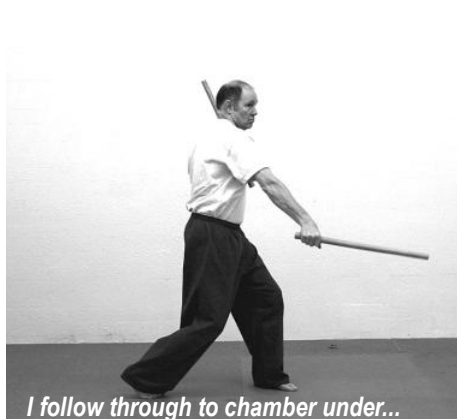
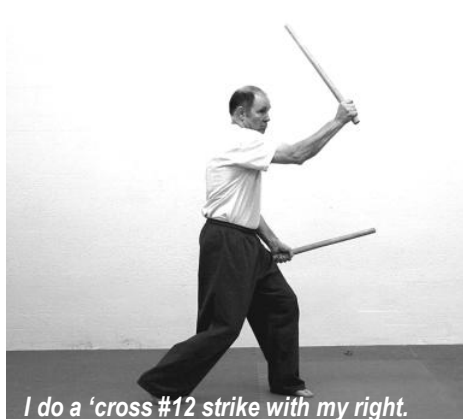
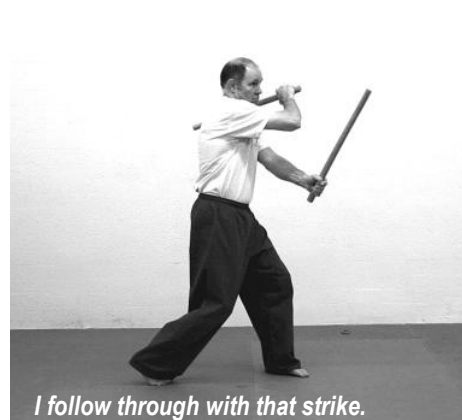
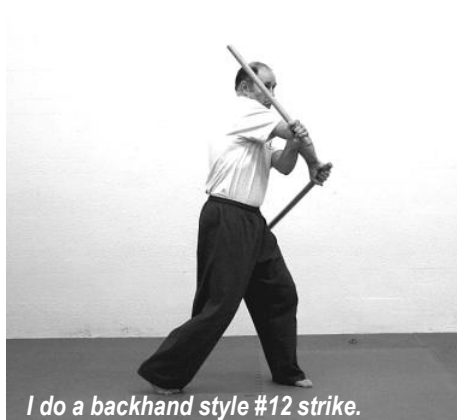
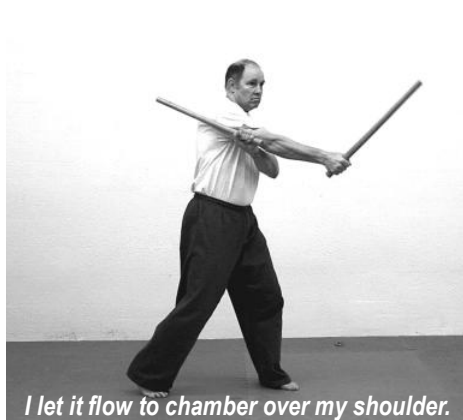
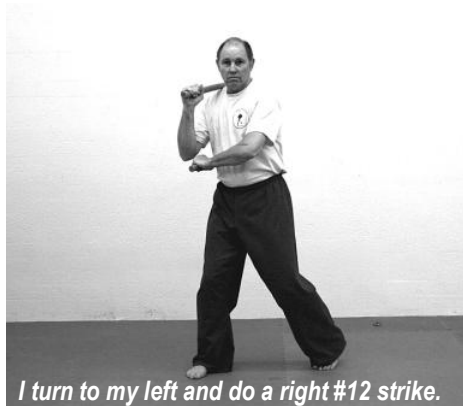


Sinawali patterns - Reverse Sinawali





Although technically not a sinawali, the Redonda X movement is another double cane weaving pattern as well.



These patterns are usually done with a partner to enhance coordination.



*Single Sinawali*



*Double Sinawali*



*Reverse Sinawali*



*Redonda application - I block her strike.*



*My first counter goes to her hand.*



*My second counter goes to her head.*

For combat use there are a number of positions you can operate from. As far as 'guards' are concerned, I look at these more as positions you end up in rather than start out from. Below are some examples.



*Full Guard*



*Half Guard*



*'Zen Guard' (open position)*



*Up-down Guard*

Beginning with the simplest applications I'll go over some of the actions one can do with the double cane. The double cane actions are the base skills one develops for later skills in *baston y daga* (stick & dagger) and *espada y daga* (sword & dagger).

Basic Double Cane - Full Guard.



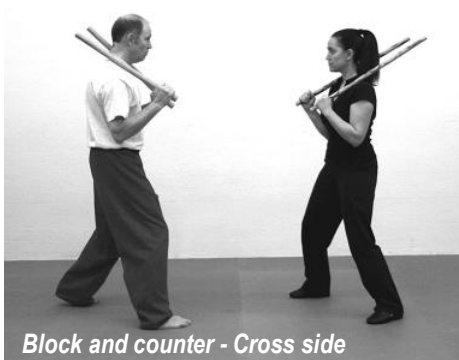
*Block and counter - Same side*



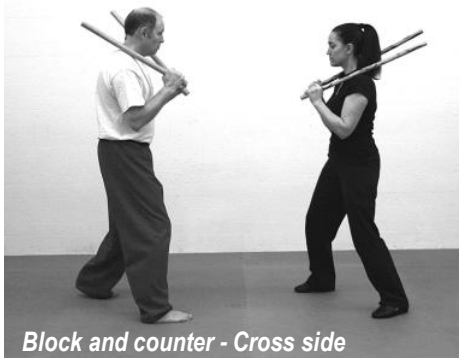
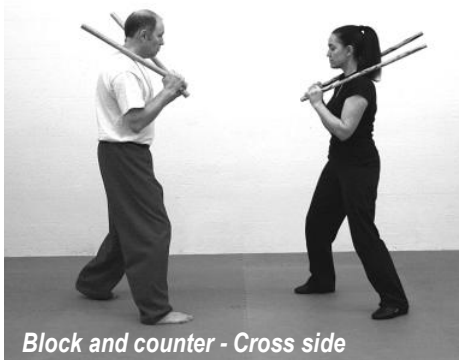
*Block and counter - Same side*



Basic Double Cane actions continued - Full Guard.



Basic Double Cane actions continued - Full Guard.



Basic Double Cane actions continued - Half Guard.

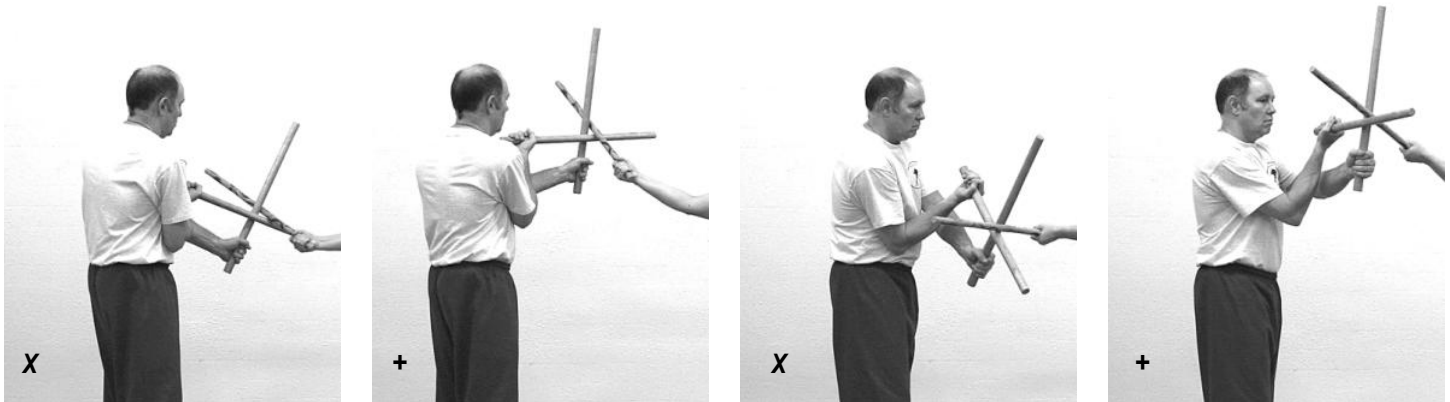


Basic Double Cane actions continued - Half Guard.





Basic Double Cane actions continued - Up-down.



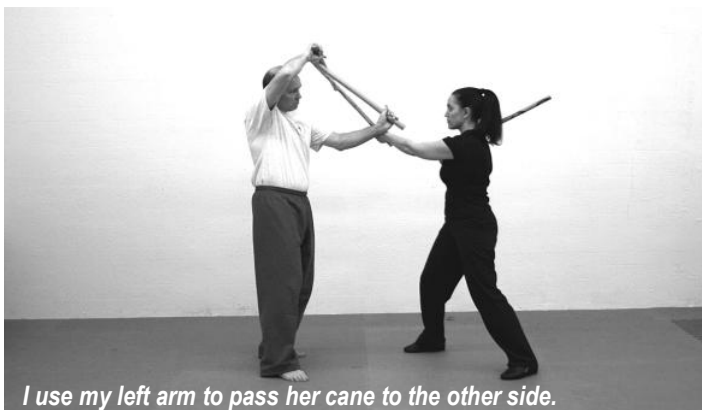
I will demonstrate using the Crossada defense using the Up-down. A note about the Crossada before we begin: the Crossada will shift from an 'X' position (at the mid line) to a plus (+) position as the canes raise up. You can pass a mid line and low line strike down while a high line strike will be passed overhead.



Basic Double Cane actions continued - Up-down.



Basic Double Cane actions continued - Up-down.



Basic Double Cane actions continued - Up-down.



Basic Double Cane actions continued - 'Zen Guard' (my nickname for the open or abierta position).



*Block and counter - same side*



*Block and counter - cross side*



*Evade and counter - my partner strikes...*



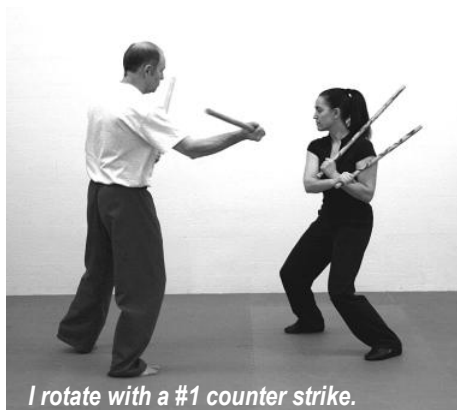
*at my leg. I withdraw my leg and do an...*



*underhand #2 strike to off set her.*



*I shift my weight to my right leg.*



*I rotate with a #1 counter strike.*



Basic Double Cane actions continued - 'Zen Guard'.





Basic Double Cane actions continued - 'Zen Guard'.



*My partner strikes at my left leg.*



*I step sideways to get my leg out of the arc of her strike.*



*I step off to my rear angle with my right leg.*



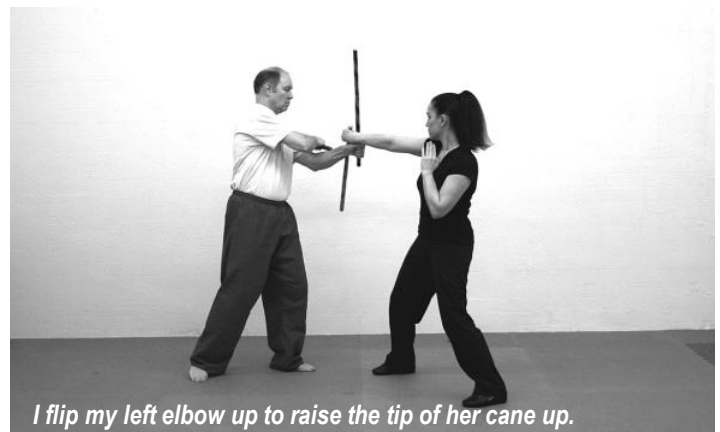
*As her strike misses my leg I fire my left cane at her head.*



*I follow up with a strike to her arm.*



Some of the more difficult actions with the double cane have to do with disarming your opponent. The degree of difficulty rises due to the amount of coordination needed to manipulate your opponent's cane into the leverage you need for an effortless disarm. Although they are somewhat impractical in combat, they are great for attribute development.



Double cane disarms continued.



*My partner strikes at me with a #1 strike.*



*I angle step and 'scissors capture' (left block - right insertion).*



*I contact her cane at the junctions of my grips and cane.*



*I push slightly down with my left cane.*



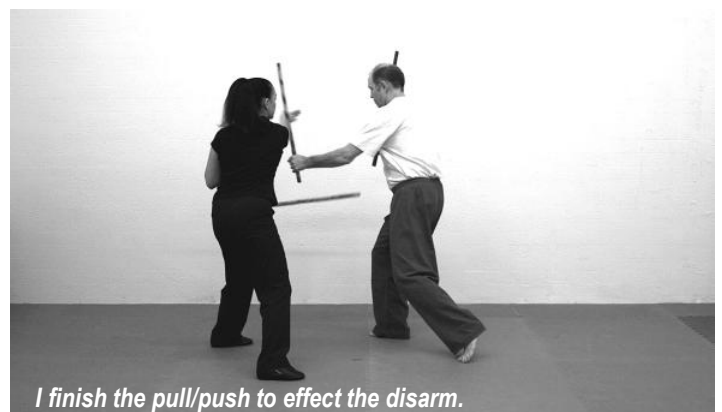
*I pull back with my right. Your canes should be vertical.*



*I rotate to my right. Of the two forces the pull is more important.*

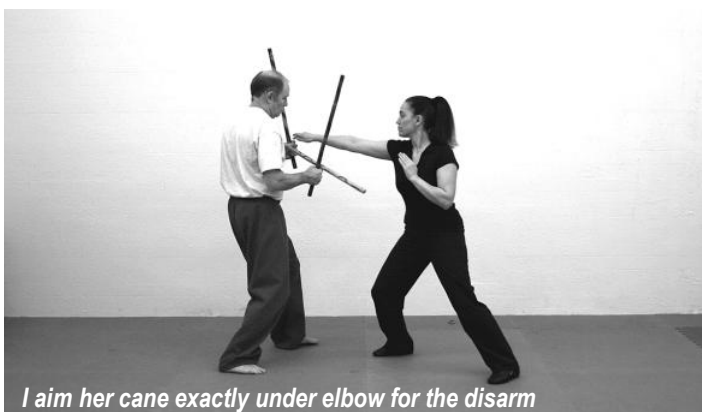


*I aim her cane to go exactly under her elbow.*

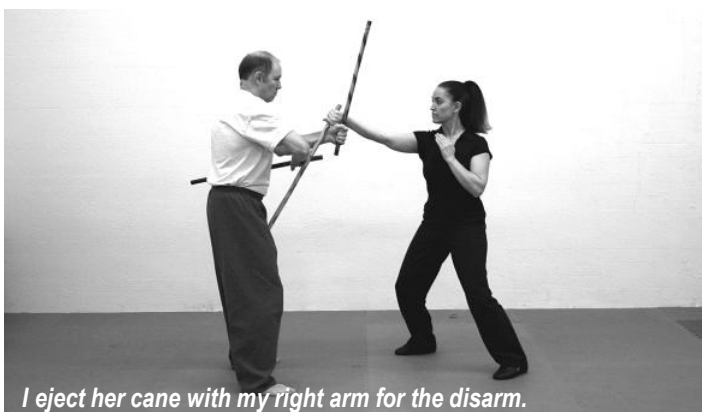


*I finish the pull/push to effect the disarm.*

Double cane disarms continued.



Double cane disarms continued.



Double cane disarms continued.,





Double cane disarms continued.



Double cane disarms continued.



*My partner strikes with a #2 strike.*



*I side step and block.*



*I roll my cane hand palm up...*



*to the opposite side of her cane and...*



*push her cane arm aside with my arm...*



*and strike her.*



*I use my arm to depress her arm.*



*This allows me to easily slip the tip of...*



*my cane under her wrist.*



*When our canes are vertical...*



*I flip her cane over and grab it...*



*for the disarm.*

Double cane disarms continued.



*My partner strikes at me with a #1 strike.*



*I angle step and block.*



*I run my arm so that my wrist goes to the other side of her cane.*



*I flip my wrist for an abanico strike. I continue to run the...*



*tip of my cane down and under her wrist.*



*I roll my wrist so that my cane is vertical. I connect my left...*



*cane to hers and punch it over her elbow for the disarm.*

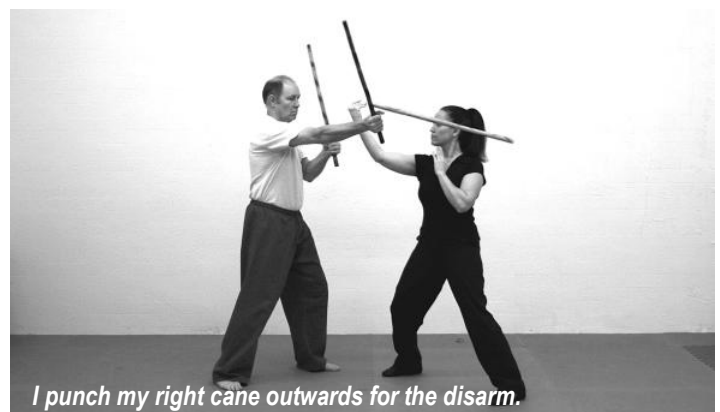


*I inject her cane into her face for my safety.*

Double cane disarms continued.



Double cane disarms continued.



Once you get into baston y daga, the first thing you half to deal with is that the uses of an impact weapon and an edged weapon are different. One smashes and the other cuts. They have two different energies and they must be trained as such.





When you are angling with baston y daga or espada y daga, there is a change you need to make from angling against an impact weapon. When you angle against an impact weapon it is perfectly safe to angle inside the strike.



*Angling inside a cane strike.*



*This is safe as she doesn't have a blade in her other hand.*

Angling to the inside against someone who has a blade in their other hand, as in baston y daga or espada y daga, is dangerous as you are moving into blade range.



*If she has a blade in her other hand...*



*I step right into range of her knife.*



When angling to the inside it is safer to side step rather than forward angle step.



*Side stepping to the inside of the strike.*



*Her blade can't reach me.*



*Counter striking the blade arm.*

Here are several very simple drills to acquaint you with baston y daga.



*Stationary block and stab*



*Angle step block and stab*



*Simultaneous block and stab*



*Block and slash*



Baston y daga drills continued.



Espada Y Daga is where you have two bladed weapons. Cutting, slashing, tip ripping, hacking and stabbing are your offensive uses here. A point to bring up regarding defense is that if your blade comes into contact with your opponent's, you meet his edge with the flat of your blade. This way you don't ruin your edge upon impact. Distancing and maneuverability are very key to espada y daga. One cut to the wrong part of the body and the fight and life is lost.



Here are some of the various actions peculiar to the long blade.

### Slash



*The chief characteristic of the slash is that the blade connects with the target and then draws across the skin.*

### The Hack



*The Hack is the blade action of the Blast. You hammer with the edge on the target.*

## Tip Rip



There are many different schools and applications of espada y daga. My lineage (Modern Arnis) uses the bolo (roughly 18 - 20 inches or thereabouts). At the extreme end of the spectrum would be San Miguel Escrima which uses a 31 inch sword as their long blade weapon.

You can use many of the block and counter moves from double cane and baston y daga in your espada y daga. I'll illustrate some of the possible crossada applications using the double edge.





Espada y daga applications continued.



Espada y daga applications continued.



Espada y daga applications continued.



*My partner cuts at me with cut #1.*



*I withdraw my lead foot and meet it with crossada.*



*I step forward with my left behind her long blade...*



*and simultaneously pass her arm to my right while I cut down.*



*I follow my cut with a left hand #7 stab.*



The third subdivision of Ambidexterity has to do with 'Cross Hand Training'. This is emphasized more in Modern Arnis as taught by Remy Presas than some other FMA systems. Prof. Presas was left handed and trained as a right hander as well. This gave him an advantage as he was very skilled with both hands. There are some FMA systems which are very dogmatic regarding which hand does what, one doing only a particular function and so on. I personally stress training both sides. If one side is injured you stand a chance of surviving if the other side can function.

Most of the cross hand applications can be trained simply by switching the hand the cane is in. Your basics are the same one side to the other. For something not quite so common I'll demonstrated how to disarm your opponent's strikes 1-12 with the cross arm.



Cross hand disarms continued.



*Cross disarm against strike #2.*



*My partner strikes with strike #2. I angle and cross check.*



*I depress her cane arm to make it easy for me to slip the tip...*



*of my cane under her wrist.*



*I roll my left elbow out to roll her cane arm.*



*This delivers her cane to my waiting check hand.*

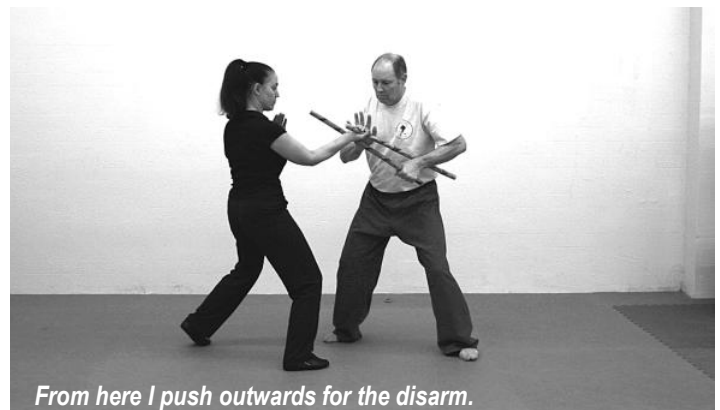


*I peel the cane out of her grip.*



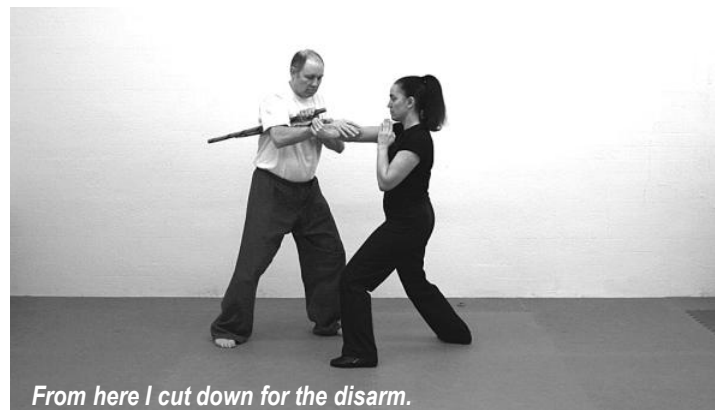
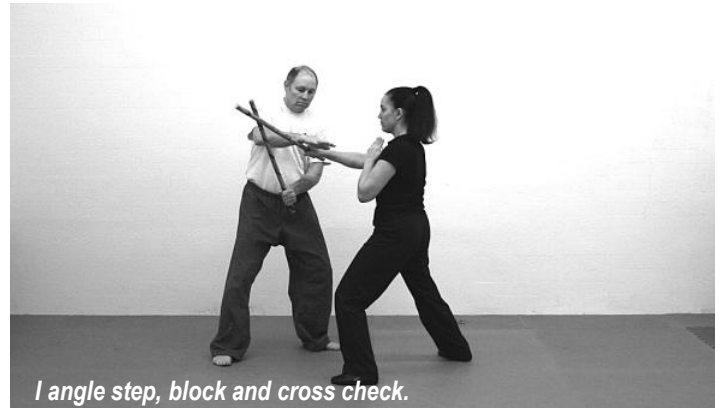
*I push down her arm with my left cane for my safety.*

Cross hand disarms continued.

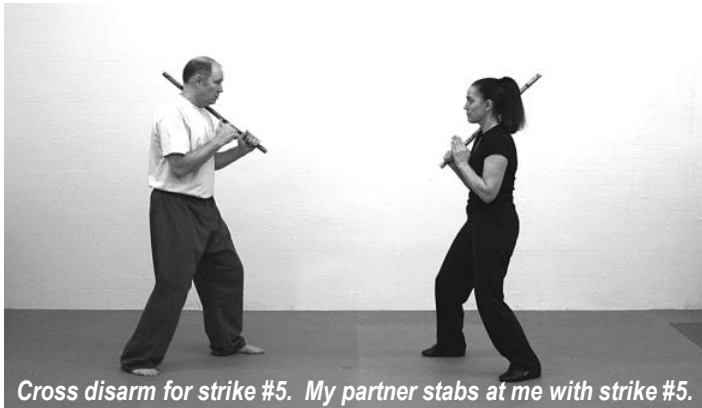




Cross hand disarms continued.



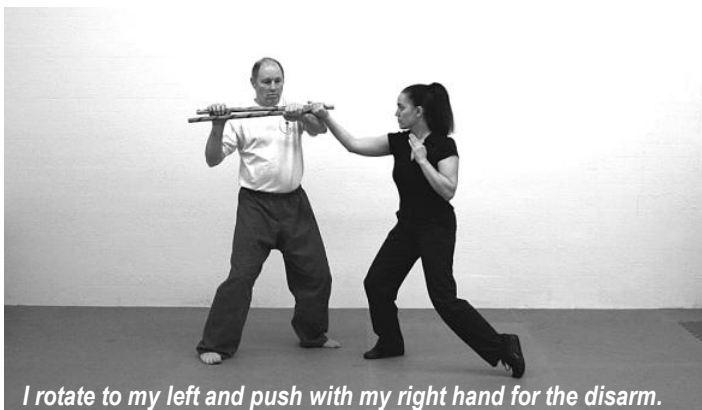
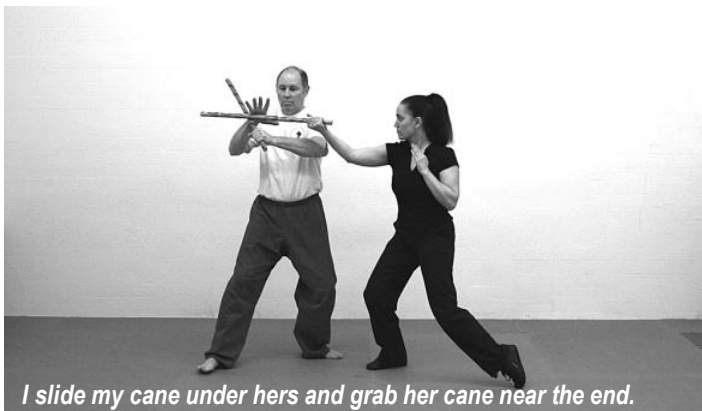
Cross hand disarms continued.



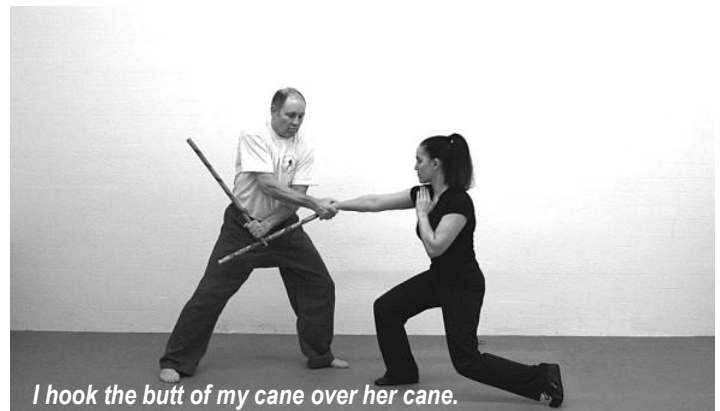
Cross hand disarms continued.



Cross hand disarms continued.

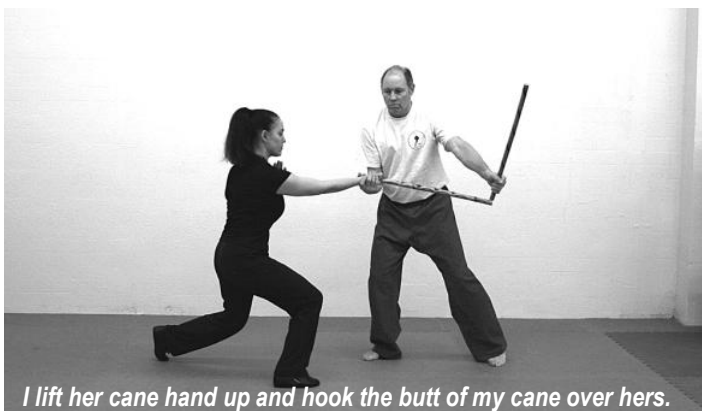
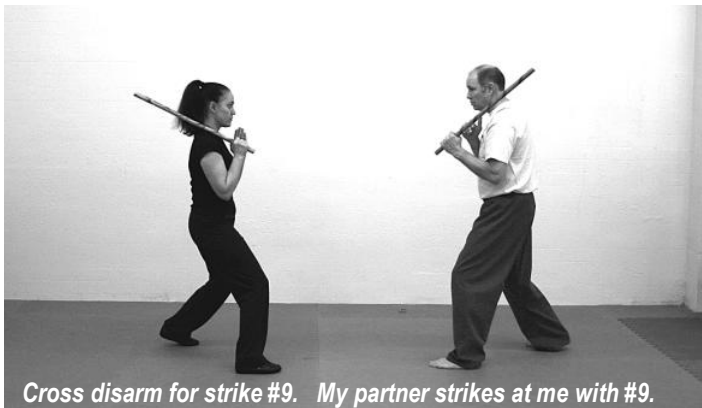


Cross hand disarms continued.



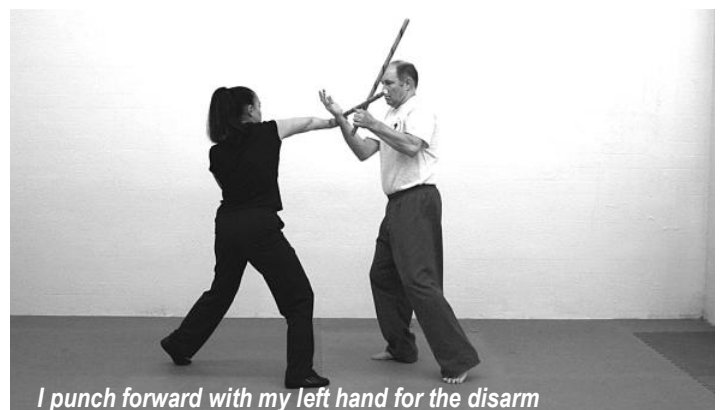
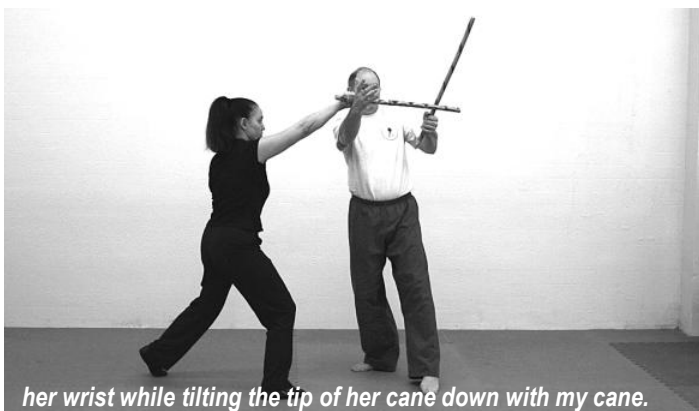


Cross hand disarms continued.

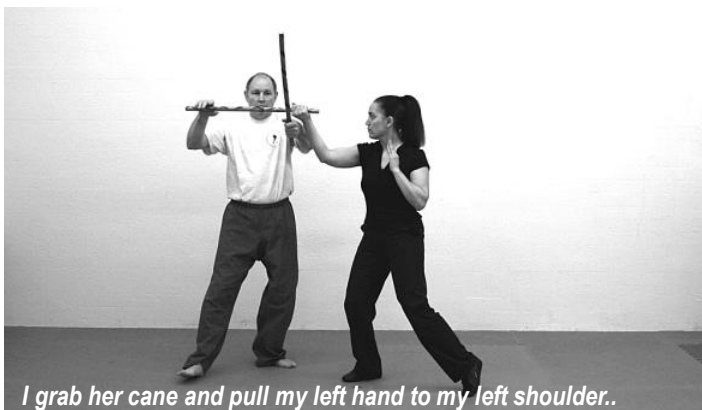
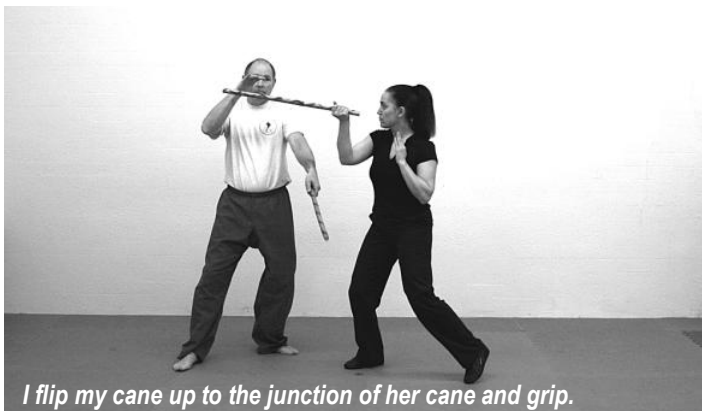




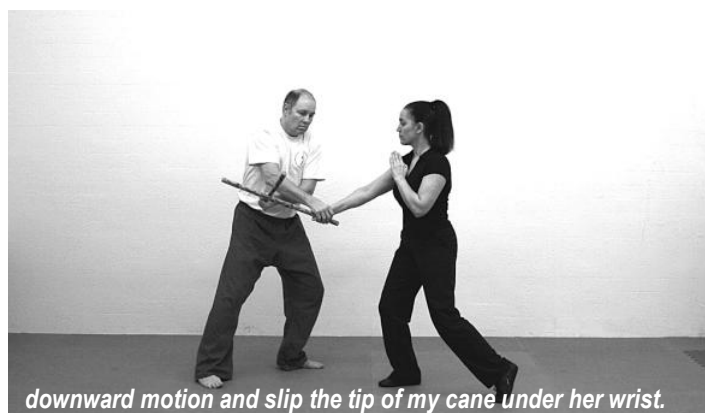
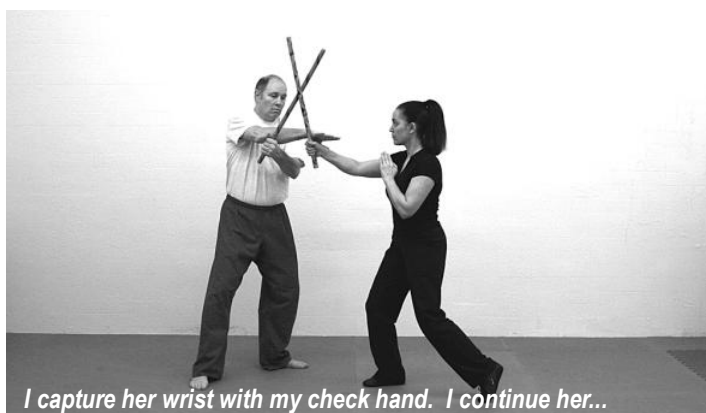
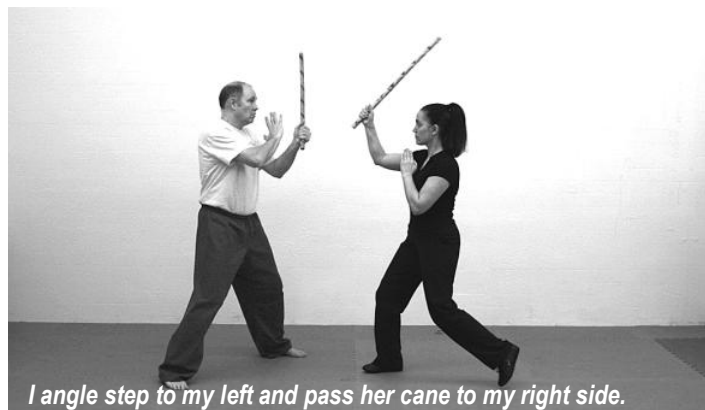
Cross hand disarms continued.



Cross hand disarms continued.



Cross hand disarms continued.



Cross hand disarms continued.



This photo sequence below is a technique I taught at the 2nd Annual Presas Brothers Arnis Seminar in February 2009. This is an action taken from the Presas family art of espada y daga.



## SPONTANEITY

80 = 8 → 0

The above symbol means *'the possibility of anything reduced to the simplicity of the moment'*. This is the '80' in MA-80. When GM Remy taught any technique, he would show variations upon variations of applications of that one move. He would say, 'That is the beauty of the art. There are so many things you can do.' I noticed, however, when you surprised him he was astonishingly direct. He was the perfect example of someone who knew variations upon variations of many, many moves but in real time his action was simple and to the point.

In order to achieve '80' one needs to train in all aspects of their art, not just their favorite aspects. When one does this their recognition ability increases by quite a lot. I remember when I was coming up the ratings in Black Belt competition; I could hit opponents with techniques they never trained in. Before they could recognize what was coming, they would be hit. I use this same concept in FMA. Remember what I said about GM Antonio Ilustrisimo changing his counter action every time? This is a good example of what I am talking about – the simplicity of the moment.

Any of the flow drills or counter the counter drills such as the 6-count drills shown on pages 109-114 or the defensive range drill on pages 115-116 are a good start. The original Modern Arnis tapi-tapi drill is another. The original tapi-tapi drill was a counter the counter drill where you would feed your partner strikes 1-12 and block their return strike. This drill keeps you from posing after your strike. The original tapi-tapi drill is shown below.

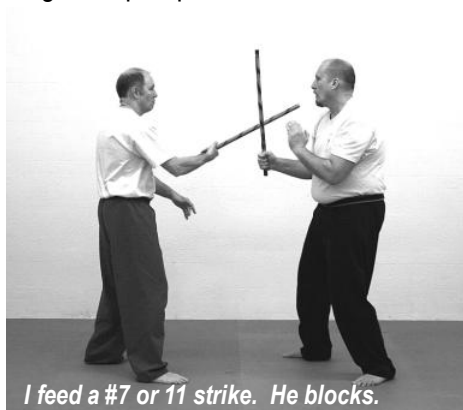




Original tapi-tapi drill continued.



Original tapi-tapi drill continued.



Another drill to train spontaneity is what I call '3 second repetitions'. 3 second repetitions is where you are continuously striking at your partner and every three seconds your partner strikes at you. You must in the flow of your motion defend against the strike and continue striking without a break in your action. What this drill does is train you to keep an eye on your opponent's possible counter while you are striking at him. All too often a person gets so much into the attack that he fails to see a counter strike. This drill handles that. On the written page this drill may be hard to get a good grasp of so you should review the accompanying DVD to really get the flavor of it.



The key to this drill is to be observant of your partner while you are striking. Don't only look at the targets but get your partner in your entire view. Then when a counter strike appears unexpectedly, you can alter your action from a strike to a block and then continue on. Start out slowly and as you become more skilled, graduate to 2 second reps, 1 second reps and finally free flow.

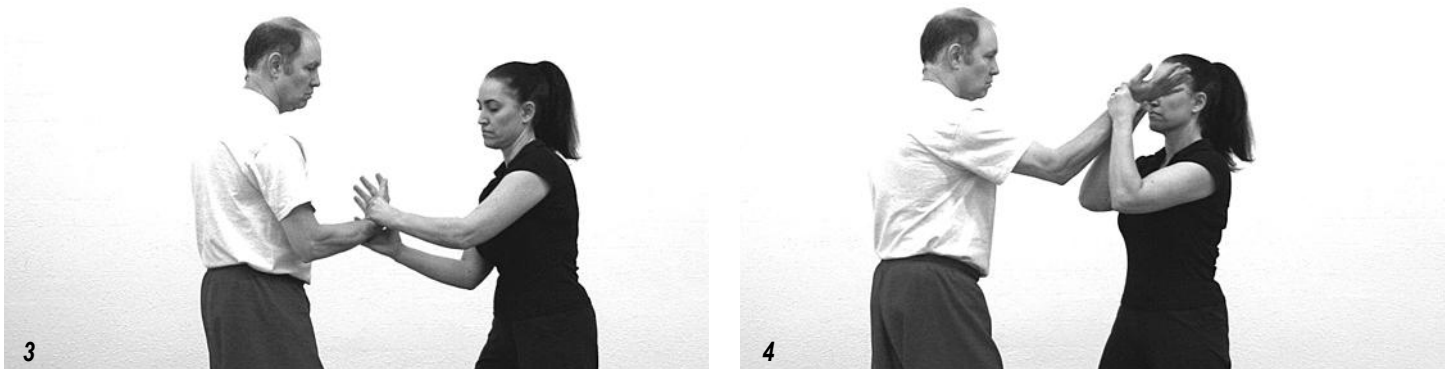
How do you train to recognize? Pay attention when you are being the *recipient* of a technique. Yes, the recipient. This is where most students don't pay attention. They work on perfecting the move they are working on so that when it is their partner's turn, attention drops. This is the time to really pay attention. This is so you can recognize your opponent's initial moves and counter right away. You develop recognition of motion. GM Remy was a master of this. When you are familiar with motion, you will recognize your partner's motion soon enough to counter it.

I have used this a lot with countering joint locks. I have taught this concept in the Philippines and at summer camps in the US as well as in seminars in Germany and the UK. I have stymied every arnisador and jujutsu practitioner I have faced. Why? Because I have developed recognition to a pretty good degree and applied the Flow (next chapter) in my counter. I have even had a person who had done taiji ask me if I had done taiji because I was so soft and relaxed in my defense.

Develop recognition and you will seldom ever be caught off guard.



*In pictures 1&2 above I observe where she wants me to go with her lock.*



*Having trained my observation I can change the trajectory or her action while using a portion of her energy to do so (3&4).*

Much of the mystery regarding mastery of martial arts lies in the ability to recognize, the ability to tell what is happening faster than conscious thought. Paying attention to what you and your partner are doing while drilling is a key aspect to developing this ability. This is where the drills, especially the different types of flow drills come in. As you do these over and over you begin to recognize motion as it happens. When you work on the locks and throws you develop a tactile recognition of motion. This, developed to a high degree, is what separates mastery from expertise. A firm belief of mine is this mastery is available to every student of the martial arts.

A simple but good example of Spontaneity is when I was training in the Philippines. During a drill my partner grabbed my cane and fired a punyo counter unexpectedly. As you can see I reacted by trapping her strike with my check hand.



## THE FLOW

In respect to Filipino Martial Arts what is the end game? What is the overall product you are trying to achieve? The end game is delineated in these final two chapters: The Flow and Counter The Counter. The Flow is one of the two core basics of Modern Arnis that GM Remy stressed to me. He would say there is no Modern Arnis without the Flow. An over simplified definition of the Flow is *continuity of motion or option*.

This is a whole lot more than just keep moving. This is adaptation when a technique goes wrong. This is translation of a cane move to empty hand. This is training and becoming familiar with many options so that one can apply '80.' The Flow is the conceptual and physical essence of FMA. The Flow is everywhere in Filipino Martial Arts. There are some basic flow development exercises that I teach from the beginning so that the student will learn the concept. The Flow is the blood brother to the next chapter topic, Counter The Counter.

Flow drill #1 is the first introduction to the flow that I teach my students. The simplicity of it is my partner strikes at me (in succession) with two #12 strikes followed by a #3 and #4 strike. Each strike is met by a horizontal (side by side) crossada defense. Horizontal crossada is the defensive action of the Banda y Banda (side by side) stroke. The is where you use the scissors check the most, slashing their cane arm with your cane while passing their strike with your open hand. This drill practiced over and over again will develop not only the flow but coordinated action as well.





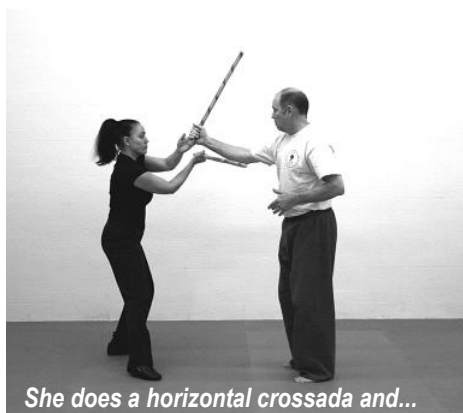
Basic Flow Drill in full (demonstrating stepping actions).



Basic Flow Drill in full continued.



Following the Basic Flow Drill is 'Give & Take'. This is a back and forth striking and defending drill which not only increases your ability to flow but also trains you to go from where you are. This is very important as you will not always get the opportunity to set before you go. I'll go into this more in the Counter The Counter chapter. A characteristic of the original Give & Take drill is that it is in slashing distance - all of your counter strokes go to your partner's cane arm. You do not go cane to cane. There is a drill in the accompanying DVD ('Block-Check-Counter-Counter') where you do go cane to cane. To give the flavor of Give & Take I'll use the next two pages to illustrate it.



Give & Take continued.



*I stab at her with a #5 strike.*



*She cuts and passes.*



*She stabs at me with her own #5 strike.*



*I pass her stab and slash.*



*I hit at her with a #8 strike.*



*She steps back, passes and slashes.*



*She steps in with a #12 strike.*

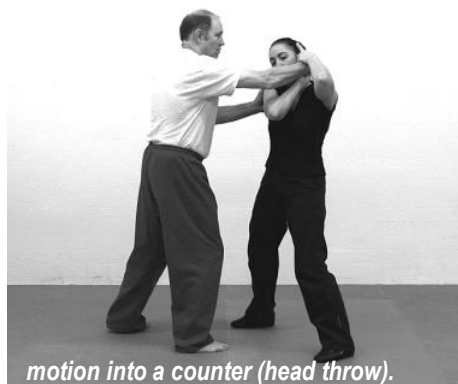
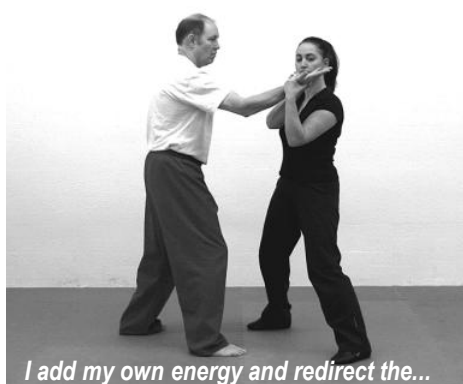


*I parry with my check hand.*

One application of the Flow that works beautifully is to counter joint locks. As I have mentioned earlier in this book, any action is composed of three parts; a starting point, change (usually movement through space) and an end point. When, in practice, you have been observing your partner applying a joint lock on you, you should be able to:

1. feel the start point (their grab and *how* they grab)
2. the movement they make with your arm, and
3. the end point (where the lock is complete and you are in pain).

Knowing this you apply the Flow during the change (2) to add to their energy in order to redirect the motion to somewhere else. This is actually a very simple thing to do. Here are a couple of illustrations of this use of the Flow.



Using the Flow to counter joint locks continued.



*Forearm bar. She grabs (Start)*



*She positions my arm (Change), does...*



*the lock to the point of pain (Stop).*



*Counter example #1.*



*As she pulls my arm...*



*I drop it down and grab her other hand.*



*I bend my left elbow so I can move my...*



*forearm up to counter lock her.*



*Counter example #2. I add to her pull...*



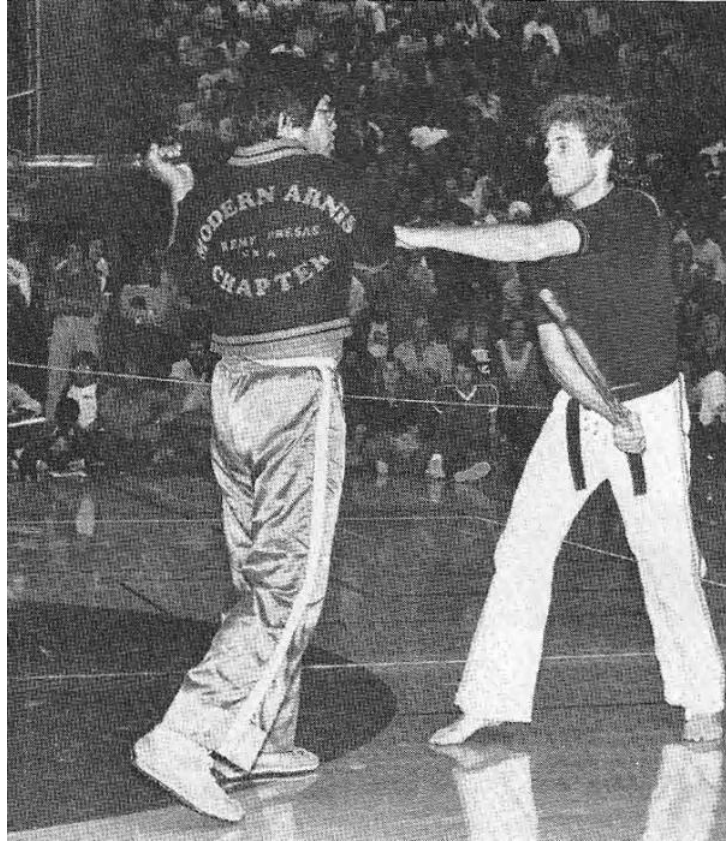
*with my own push. I step behind her to...*



*counter with a diving throw.*



This is my favorite photo of me with my teacher, Remy Presas.



1981 Portland Pro-Am Karate Championships

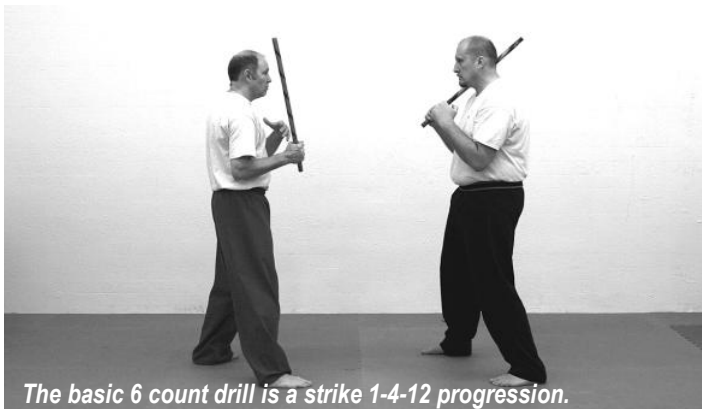
## COUNTER THE COUNTER

This is the second core concept GM Remy taught me. He would say, *'Danny, if you can counter the counter you will not be beaten.'* This is advice I took straight to heart. Every motion I do I am looking for my opponent's option of what he can possibly do to me in return. This is why I stress structure and alignment so much, especially mine. To counter my opponent's counter. Every action I do has a back up option.

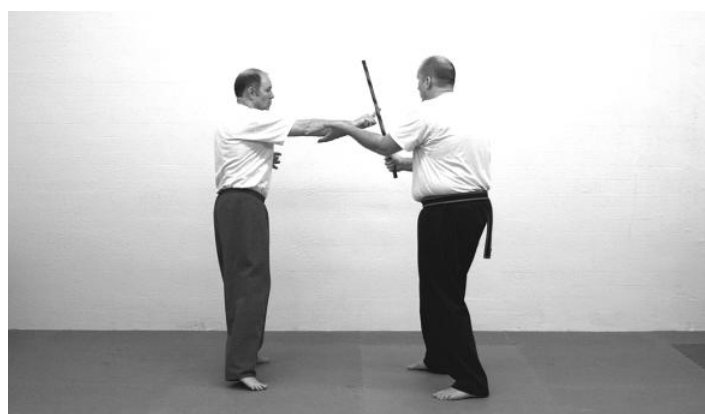
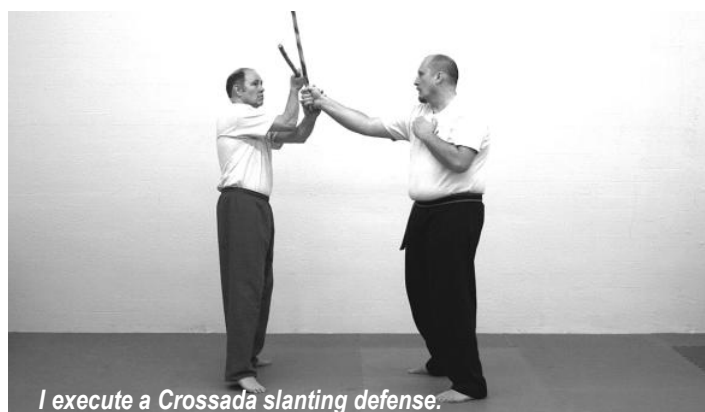
I always count on my opponent trying to stop or counter me in some way. This, by the way, isn't GM Remy's idea alone. Manong Ted would say to me when I would do a non-optimum move, *'That will work against Jose but will it work on another Dan?'*

Counter The Counter requires extroverted attention. You always need to factor your opponent into the equation. All too often a student will pay more attention to his execution of a move than to his opponent. This is fine when learning a technique but after a while it becomes a liability. You need to pay attention to your opponent, as he will probably try to do something to foil your move. If you don't see this in time, he will foil your move and you will be back at square one.

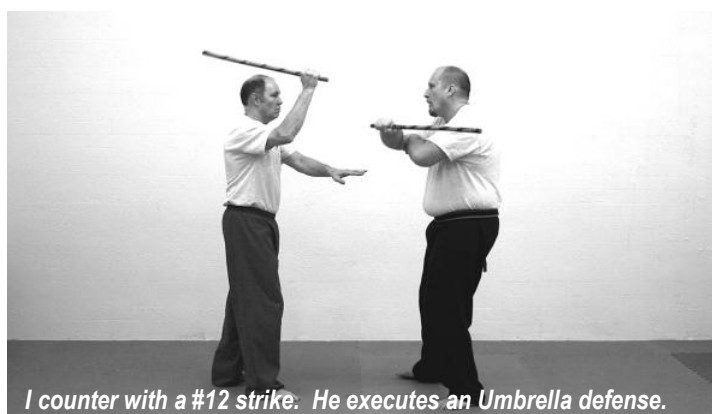
The very first drill where this concept really came home to me was in an expanded version of the basic 6 count drill (pages 109-111). GM Remy introduced a couple of new options into the drill at strike #4. A phrase he constantly used finally came home to me - *'No matter where you are, you are there already.'* It hit home that whatever position I was in there was always an option, always somewhere I could go. I will illustrate this as well as a couple of other Counter The Counter drills I use in my school.



Expanded 6 count drill version one.



Expanded 6 count drill version two.



A very fruitful area to train Counter The Counter is in disarm counters. This trains you to recognize options at a glance. When your opponent goes for a disarm they give you minimally one of four options (illustrated below):

1. access to his arm
2. access to his cane
3. access to your cane
4. access to a target



When you study the disarm counters (reversals) you'll notice a couple of key points I apply. First is I don't fight the disarm. If my opponent has it, I abort my action and give it to him. While he is disarming me, I go onto another action. I do not fight it if my opponent has the angle and leverage. I can feel if he does or doesn't. Second is I do not give up my structure in order to keep the cane. This is a beginner's error. I've seen many students twist, bend and the like in order to keep the cane. I'll ask *'Would you do that in a real fight?'* The answer is uniformly *'No.'* Well, if you wouldn't do it in combat you shouldn't do it in practice. Third is I usually try to immediately go inside the range of the counter strike, if possible. Last and most important is that I never try to force an option or try to make a favorite option fit. Things are far too fluid while in motion so I take what I'm given. This is one of the main points I'll stress to my students - take what you are given. Quite often all you have is a target. Starting on the next page I'll demonstrate disarm counters for Modern Arnis strikes 1 - 12 to illustrate the options you have.

Disarm counter for strike #1.



*She begins the disarm for strike #1.*



*I roll my hand over as she begins to peel the cane from my grip.*



*I grab onto her cane and put my right hand under her hand.*



*I pull her cane down to my right side and push down...*



*on her hand to strip her cane out of her grip.*



*I pull back her cane for my safety.*



Disarm counter for strike #2.



Disarm counter for strike #3.



*Access to her hand/arm.*



*My partner blocks my #3 strike and begins her disarm action.*



*I grab her check hand with my right hand.*



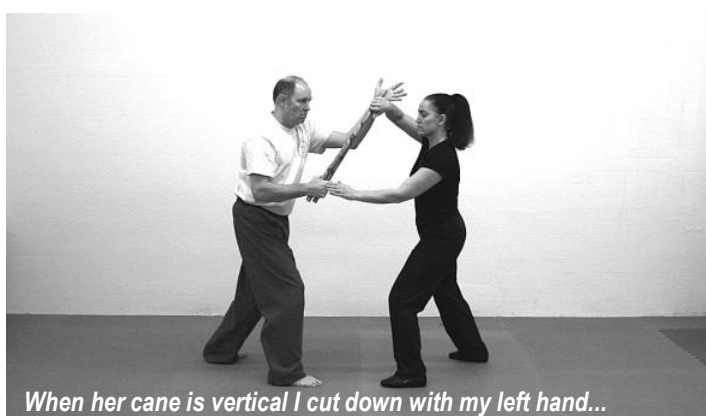
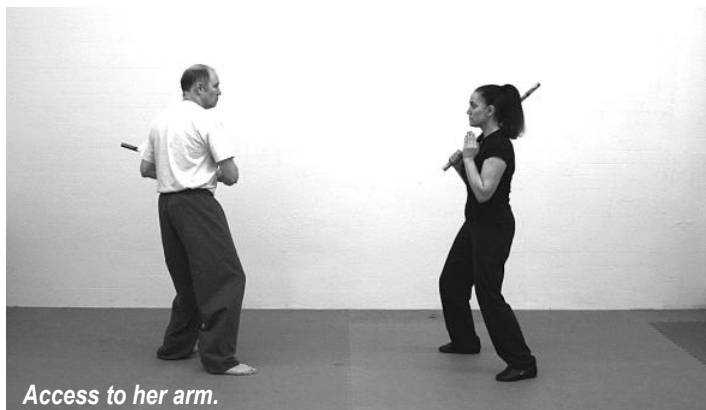
*As her hand threads through, I let go of my cane.*



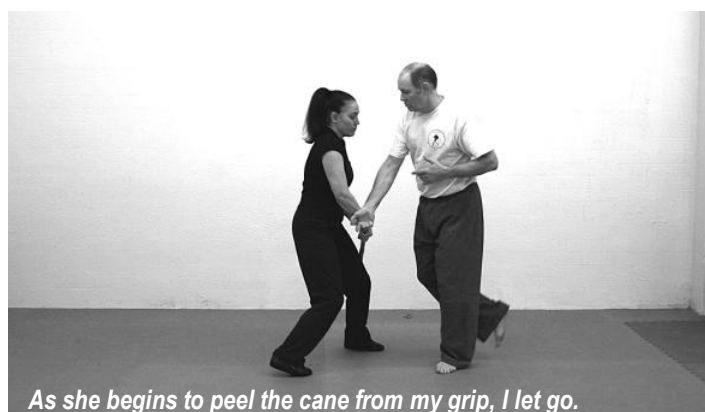
*I follow up with a two hand wrist lock as my counter.*



Disarm counter for strike #4.



Disarm counter for strike #5.



Disarm counter for strike #6.





Disarm counter for strike #7.





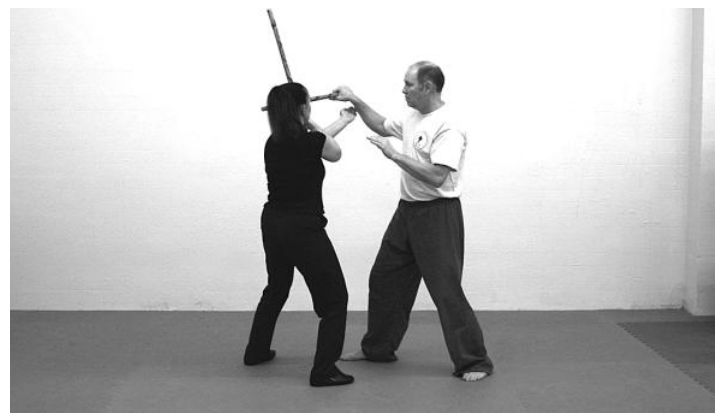
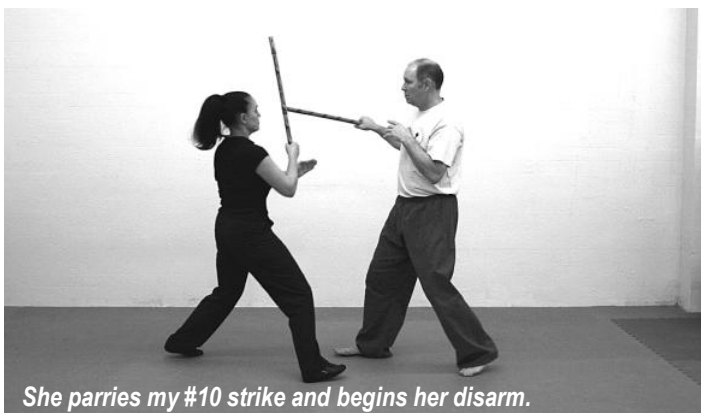
Disarm counter for strike #8.



Disarm counter for strike #9.



Disarm counter for strike #10.



Disarm counter for strike #11.



Disarm counter for strike #12.



*Access to her arm.*



*I do a #12 strike at her.*



*She defends with an umbrella action.*



*She swings my arm through...*



*to eject my cane.*



*I thread my left hand under her wrist...*



*as she ejects my cane. I roll her arm up...*



*so that I have access to her cane.*



*I grab her cane, disarm her...*



*and counter strike.*



The last drill I'll go over to emphasize Counter The Counter is what I call '*Pre-emptive Angling*'. This is angling on your offensive move rather than your defensive move. The idea here is to strike and move out of the probable angle of attack your opponent is going to use. The nice thing about this action is even if you move into the angle of attack you are so close that you invariably smother their counter attack.





Preemptive Angling continued.



A phrase my teacher, GM Remy Presas, used to use quite a bit when asked 'what if...?' questions was *'It does not matter because you are there already.'* He would then punctuate the statement with a demonstration of possible options he had. He would do this again and again. At first the statement just plain irritated me. *'What do you mean you are there already? That makes no sense.'* After many years of training and research it makes total sense. When you have drilled and drilled to the point that you can recognize faster than analytical thought, you see and feel the options and you move. You are there already.

This is the end game of Filipino Martial Arts. You are there already.



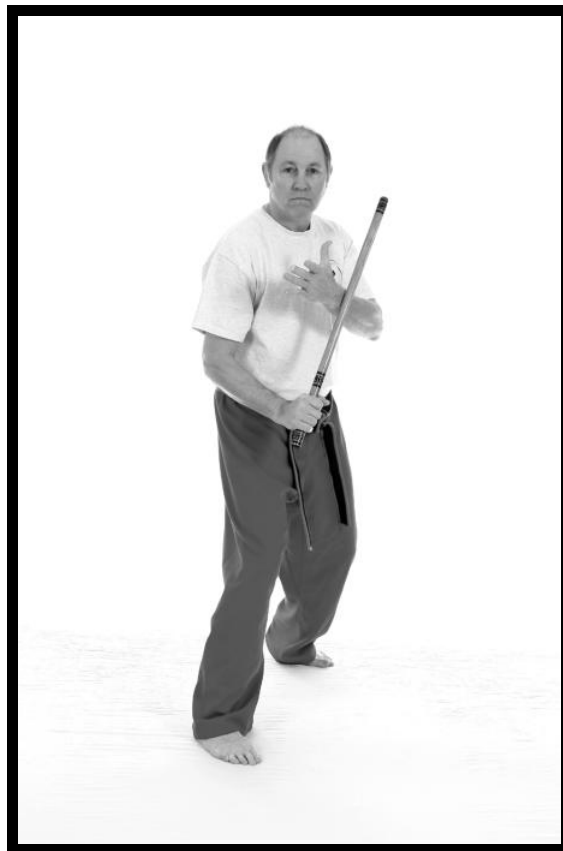
*The author leading the class in left hand figure 8 striking drills with GM Remy looking on.*

## EPILOGUE

As I said in the earlier portion of this book my real growth in FMA began when I started to watch and feel my instructor and stopped only listening to him. I studied many other martial arts and came to realize they had pretty much the same fundamental principles of operation. As I teach in my school and at seminars I see interested students, hungry for the answers...just like I was. If I have any special skills, I suppose they are the ability to discern principles and to be able to convey what I have discovered in an easy to read format.

'Secrets' usually aren't very secret. As with any endeavor, Filipino Martial Arts are governed by fundamental principles and if you don't know them, to that degree they are secret. To the degree that you do know them and can apply them (that's the rub – can *apply* them) the secrets begin to fall away.

A friend of mine said the most amazing thing to me after I had published my first book, '*American Freestyle Karate: A Guide To Sparring*'. He told me he was amazed that I put all of my secrets into one book. In reply I asked him if he thought that was all I would ever learn. I have written another 12 books and produced 13 instructional DVDs on karate and arnis since then. I figure that every 'secret' I reveal will open the door up for me to discover another. Here are the 'secrets' of Filipino Martial Arts for you to learn, work on and become skilled at. You are very welcome to them. Study hard and become skilled.



## APPENDIX A. - THE DEVELOPMENT OF MA-80

There are two 'kinds' of MA-80. One is Modern Arnis 80 which is the formal curriculum I teach at my school. The other is Masid Arnis. This is what I do. First the history of Modern Arnis 80.

My martial arts history began in 1966 in Vancouver, Washington. I studied very hard and earned my black belt in 1970 and went on to become a regional, national and finally world champion in karate competition. I met GM Remy Presas in 1980 in Oakland, California. I was impressed by a self-defense technique he executed on me and began my arnis training later in the year. This was the exact right time for me as I was getting out of tournament competition and needed a new direction. As my personal time line shows, I made my Lakan Isa (1<sup>st</sup> degree black belt) in 1982.

In around 1987 GM Remy began to have a period of ill health and I thought he was not long for this earth. It was then that I decided to discern the principles of Modern Arnis so that I had somewhere to go with my training if he died soon. This was when I stopped listening to him and began to closely watch and feel him. This was the beginning of my really understanding Modern Arnis and resulted in the book, *Advanced Modern Arnis*. He continued on for many years finally succumbing to a brain tumor in 2001.

In 1997 I requested permission to form a subsystem of my own. I did this because I wanted a standard curriculum whereby I could set out a step-by-step method of teaching his art. I received permission and off I went. In 2001, when he passed away there was a bit of confusion amongst the various groups who were carrying his art into the future. I already had my curriculum in place and called it Modern Arnis 80. The 80 has two distinct meanings: 1. 1980 is the year I began training in Modern Arnis and 2. If you turn the numeral '8' on its side you have the symbol for infinity. GM Remy would show variations upon variations of applications of any one technique but I noticed something very interesting. If you surprised him he was astonishingly direct. The '80' ended up being my personal philosophy of training and combat. It is *'the possibility of anything (8) reduced to the simplicity of the moment (0)'*.

Modern Arnis 80 (MA-80) began as my method of codifying and putting into a cohesive whole my teacher's art and ended up becoming my own art. Along with karate I studied many other martial arts. The martial arts practitioner and author Kenji Tokitsu made the delineation between *studying* and *training* in a martial art. One can research and study the principles and structures of martial arts and one can physically train under an instructor. While I trained under only a few instructors I was a voracious reader and studied anything I could get my hands on. I studied judo, aikido, taiji (tai chi), baguazhang, jujutsu – whatever I could find.

Baguazhang was one I trained in that first brought home the concept of structure. I trained with Jerry Weldon in baguazhang for a little under a year (not very long, I know) and during that time baguazhang was subtly changing how I moved. Jerry was a buddy of mine who came over to spar once a week. He began teaching my ex-wife taiji. I told him I was more interested in baguazhang and we traded instruction. I taught him arnis while he taught me baguazhang. Aside from finding hidden curves in the arnis, this was my introduction to integrated body action.

By the time I met GM Remy, I could adapt to the flowing art that he taught. For ~15 years GM Remy taught combined seminars with GM Wally Jay so I also learned the basics of Small Circle Jiu-Jitsu.

After GM Remy's death, my research continued and in 2002 I became a student of Manong Ted Buot. Manong Ted was a 1<sup>st</sup> generation student of the founder of balintawak escrima, GM Ancion Bacon. I began to learn one of the root systems of GM Remy's Modern Arnis.

My first meeting with Manong Ted Buot was incredibly illuminating. I go over the full story in the chapter on *Leveraging* (page 133). This was one of the first important steps in the evolution of MA-80. Although I have done very little balintawak escrima, it impacted me greatly and changed how I moved and viewed FMA.

I really began to notice MA-80 becoming its own entity when I was in the UK doing a series of seminars in 2005. I go over in the chapter on *Integrated Body Action* (page 171) how I was given the book, "*Angry White Pajamas*", by my friend Darren Davies. There was this passage in it that amazed me. It was when Don King and Mike Tyson visited the main dojo and watched the master demonstrate Aikido.

*"Tyson remarked, 'It's all in the knees, isn't it?' (underscore mine - DA)*

This was the first light going off over my head regarding the difference between what I was taught and what I was now doing. I base a lot of my movement off of the knees. I watched myself doing this in video footage shortly after a seminar that year. I was amazed.

Later on I was teaching my friend, Iain Abernethy, and I spotted an interesting attitude change in me. I had gotten to the point where there were things I was doing with my arnis that I now knew I was no longer '*doing Remy's art*' but was doing '*Dan's art*'. This was not out of disrespect but how confident I felt about what I was doing and why I was doing it.

Lastly I read another book titled, "*Nei Jia Quan*". The editor, Jess O'Brien conducted interviews with many practitioners and masters of various internal martial arts. I read this description/definition of internal martial arts by Tim Cartmell.

*"Internal martial arts have a certain kind of body use, a certain kind of alignment, specific ways you develop power and use it in application. In a nutshell, what we call "internal" here means that you don't use force directly against force. The idea is to use your whole body power against the opponent's more vulnerable angles and weaknesses."*

When I read that I realized he articulated perfectly that this is what I have been doing with MA-80. I had been integrating my body into my arnis applications. I believe this is where the baguazhang training came into play. The continual stress on structure and centering had permeated my arnis and karate practice.

The upshot of this is *everything* I learned influenced my approach to Filipino Martial Arts. From the time I received permission from GM Remy to form my own subsystem in 1997 to the summer of 2006, *MA-80 evolved from a clarification of my teacher's art into my own art*. I taught MA-80 at the first Remy A. Presas Memorial Training Camp and at the 3<sup>rd</sup> World FMA Festival in the Philippines in 2006. It was then when MA-80 was recognized in the Philippines as a valid branch of Modern Arnis. In 2008 I was inducted into the WHOFSC Grand Masters council. At this point MA-80 is its own entity, continuing to evolve and grow. It's an interesting thing that in this way I am following the same path my teacher took for himself. As Modern Arnis is no longer the Presas family system or balintawak escrima, MA-80 is no longer Remy Presas' Modern Arnis.

As I said in the opening statement, there are two types of MA-80: Modern Arnis 80 is what I teach to my students and Masid Arnis - 'Dan Arnis'. The term *Masid*, in Tagalog, means *'to observe or to study through close observation'*. This is what 'Dan does as opposed to what Dan teaches'. Now and then a student will ask me what I am doing. I smile and say *'Don't worry about it. Research and development.'*

My learning never stops. I draw influences from many, many sources and not all of them from FMA. My first influence was, of course, GM Remy Presas. He was my instructor for 20 years. My second major influence was Manong Ted Buot. Although I didn't train with him for many years his impact on what I do has been tremendous. Bram Frank has been another great influence on me. Much of my training had been in stick work. His application of Modern Arnis has predominantly been with the blade. I take nearly all of my blade work from him. My latest influence is Mark Wiley. We agree on nearly everything regarding principles over techniques yet his application of these same principles is different than what I do. As I am in karate I am also a sponge when it comes to Filipino Martial Arts. I remember Prof. Presas saying one time in an interview *'For me, if I see someone and I...like them, they do the move, you know. I don't care what the style (is).'* And it is the same here. One good example is the Abanico Tres Puntas style Rene Tongson teaches. I have never really liked the abanico strike until he taught his version to me. His version uses full body torque and is a power blow as well as speed blow. I have adopted that version of the technique into both MA-80s. These are some of the influences in the last 29 years. What will the next 29 years bring? I'll find out. Here is my own personal time line.

I begin karate training in 1966 and earned my black belt in 1970.

- In 1980 I begin my training in Modern Arnis in Portland, Oregon.
- In 1982 I received the rank of Lakan Isa (1<sup>st</sup> degree Black Belt)
- In 1992 I receive 6<sup>th</sup> Degree Black Belt from GM Remy.
- In 1995 I receive the title of Senior Master in the art.
- In 1997 I receive permission to form a subsystem of Modern Arnis.
- In 2001 GM Remy passes away from cancer.
- In 2002 I begin my training with Manong Ted Buot in balintawak escrima.
- In 2006 I teach MA-80 in the Philippines at both the 1<sup>st</sup> Remy A. Presas Memorial Training Camp and the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Filipino Martial Arts Festival.
- In 2007 I receive the Honor Of Andreas Bonafacio award from the Philippine Classical Arts Council, recognizing me as founder of MA-80.
- In 2008 I am inducted onto the Grand Masters Council of the World Head Of Family Sokeship Council.





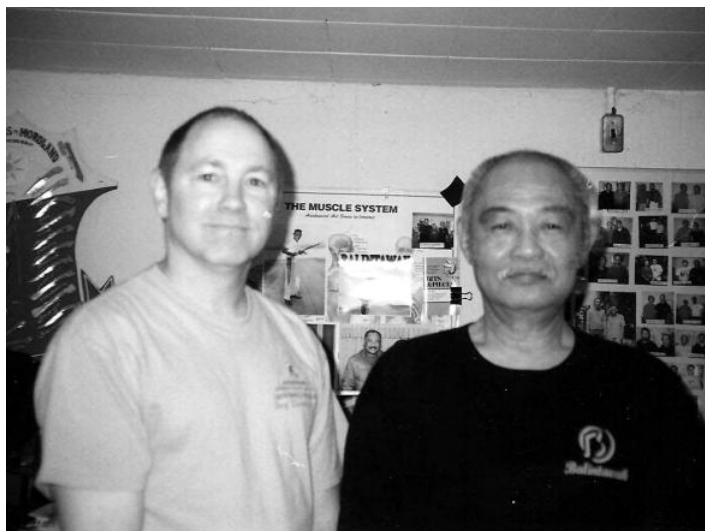
GM Remy Presas & Dan Anderson



MA-80 Certification from the Philippines



Dan Anderson receiving induction into the WHOFS's Grand Masters Council



Dan Anderson & Manong Ted Buot



Dan Anderson receiving The Honor of Gat Andres Bonafacio award from The Philippine Classical Arnis Council.

## APPENDIX B - CORE BASICS OF MA-80

MA-80 is my evolution of what I have learned from Remy Presas and Ted Buot combined with my on going research. The following are points that I consider to be core basics in MA-80. They may or may not be core basics in other systems of FMA. I do consider them important enough to include them in this book. If they aid, improve or fit in with what you do in your training, take and use them with my blessing.

### Wrist Position in Striking

The positioning of your wrist is key both to your striking as well as your blocking. I use a right angle position of the cane to the grip when I block and strike. In fact, the signature strike of MA-80 is 'the blast' which uses this right angle positioning of the wrist. A key reason I use this is that when I keep the wrist at a right angle it forces me to utilize the entire arm in my strike. All too often a strike is done with a flick of the wrist. This is okay when using a cutting tool. Impact is not needed with an edge. All you need is contact and motion.



*Right angle wrist position*



*Arm action of 'The Blast'*

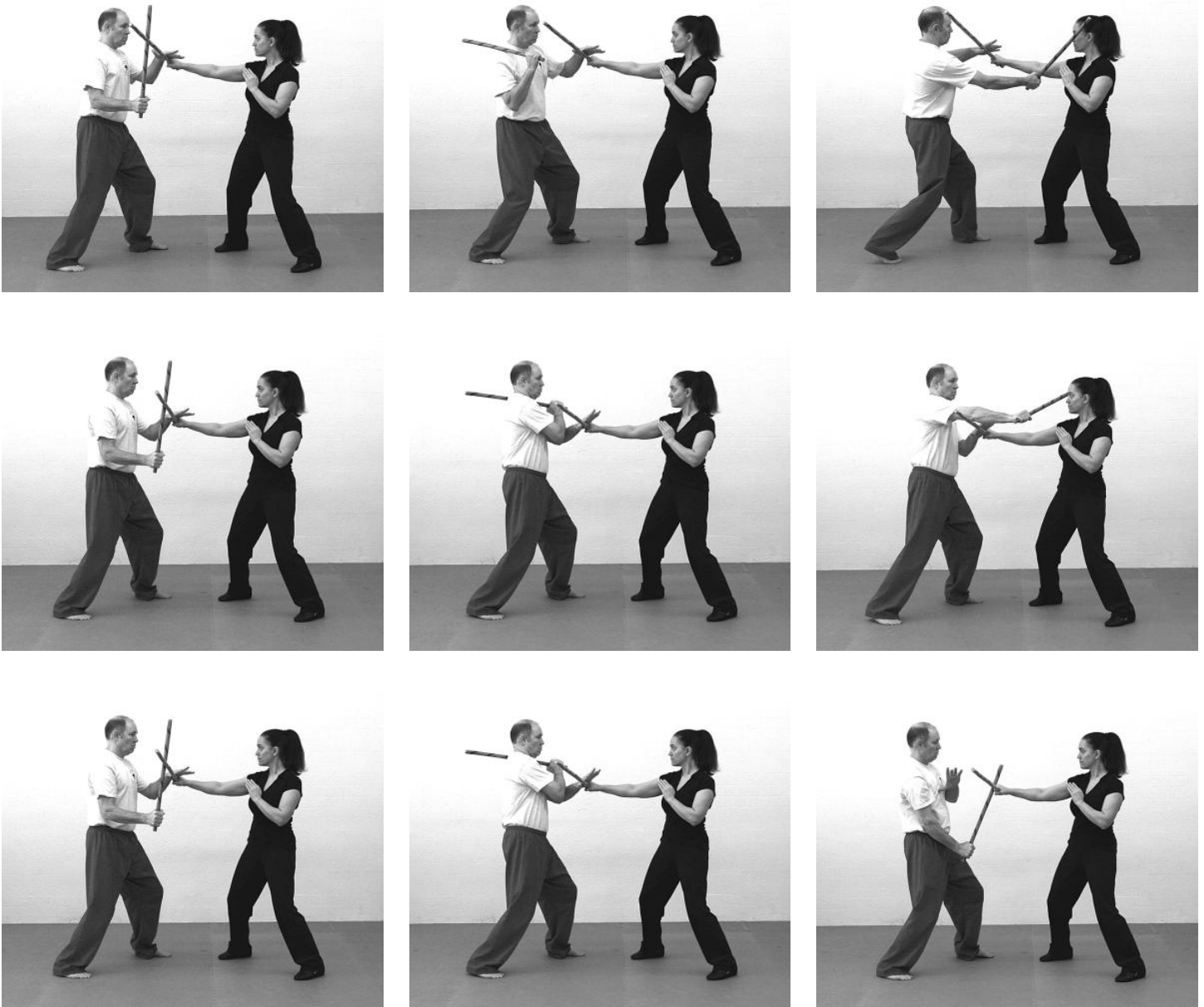


*Flicking the wrist in your strike ('fly casting')*



I delineated the different ways you can cut with an edged weapon back on pages 237 and 238. Anything that utilises the cutting characteristic of the blade is the key. You can extend your arm and use your wrist with an edged weapon. Speed and hard impact are not of prime consideration here.

An impact tool is an entirely different matter. The arm needs to be involved. You get better delivery speed when the elbow is fully bent prior to delivery and therefore harder impact. Surprisingly the wrist position is key in using this strike. If one lets the wrist flip (I call this 'fly casting'), one can get a flicking strike which might not stop an attacker. When I hit with a 'blast' and control the strike, I can get very close to my target leaving, in the words of Manong Ted, '*No room for discussion.*' If I want to follow through I can then let the wrist go at the end of the strike. A key point to remember is that you never substitute the wrist for arm and elbow action. The wrist may augment it.

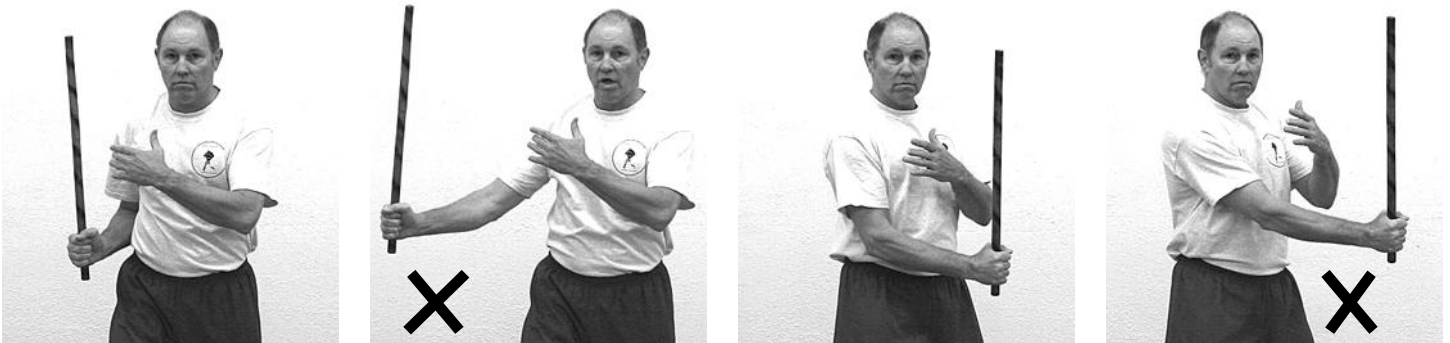


In the three examples above you can see where I don't bend the wrist in order to reach for the strike. The bottom row of pictures show how the wrist position can aid you in hitting a close quarters target, such as an extended hand.

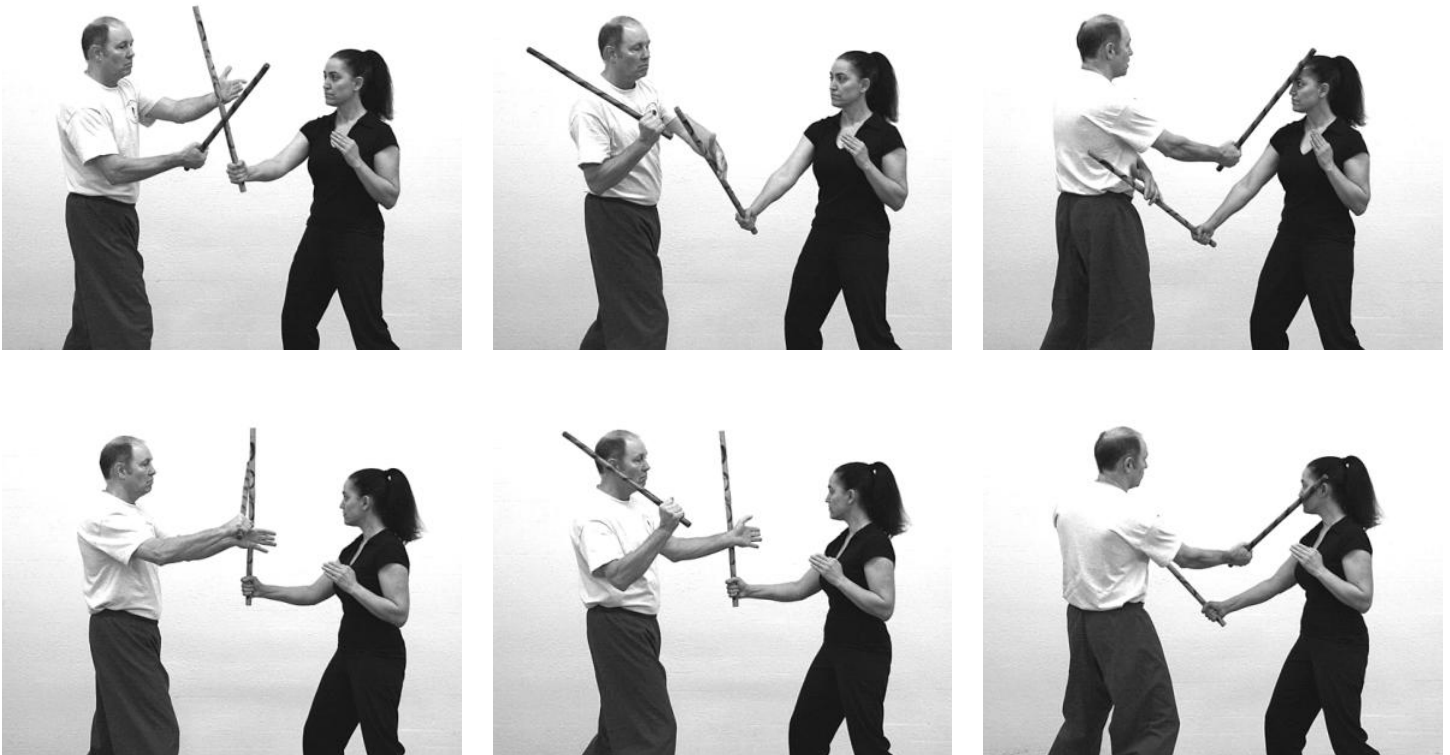
Another reason I teach the right angle wrist position is that it aids in ensuring I don't reach with my blocking action. I will go over more of this in the section on closeness of blocking. Although I don't restrict my students to only the right angle position of the wrist, I teach it first because it is the hardest position to master.

## Closeness Of Blocking

This essential is one often overlooked. When you protect yourself you are protecting a target. Often what happens is that one blocks too far out from their body. They end up 'protecting the air.' The only problem with this is that if your partner/opponent is canny, he will use that to capture your cane.



This is exactly what Manong Ted did to me. I would block too far away from my body and he would snatch it...over and over again until I learned. Shortly after that, I was training with a friend of mine and I had him block a #1 strike. Lo and behold he did the same thing. Hey, it wasn't only my mistake. Then I taught it to my students. When they make the same mistake I will ask them, *'What is so precious about the air that you think it needs protecting?'* They get the point.

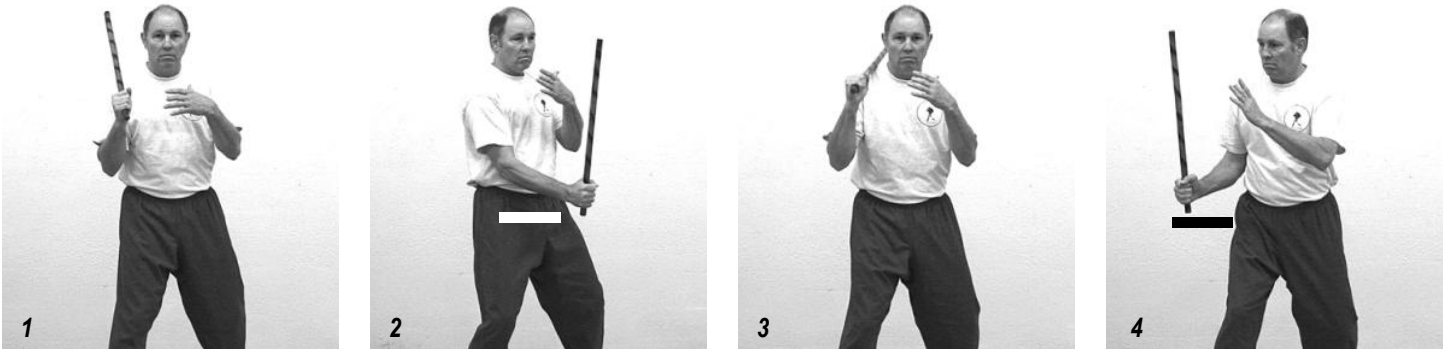


This concept is so important in my school that we have a saying to emphasize it: *'Step long, block short'*. The students keep this in mind when doing any kind of footwork with their blocks. There is no need to reach for your opponent's strike if your opponent has the intention to hit you. The cane *will* come to you.

There is a concept in kung fu and that is being able to tell between the *'hollow and the solid'*. The *'hollow'* is the fake or ineffectual blow and the *'solid'* is the real deal. I practice receiving strikes with padded canes to train to recognize real strikes when they are thrown.

There are a couple of stress points I make to my students when I teach this concept.

- The force-on-force blocks are linear actions, not slices. You go straight in on the hit. I don't slice through when blocking. More on this when I get into the chapter on Recoil Options.
- When blocking to your left your right forearm is relatively parallel to the floor and close to the stomach. This will ensure that you don't reach with your block.
- When blocking to your right your right elbow will pull slightly behind your right ribs. This will ensure that you don't reach with your block.
- For a parry against a stabbing action, minimum force is necessary. Just a nudge will do.
- A palusut (go with the force action or meet and redirect) will have the same initial straight on action as a force-to-force block. Upon contact is when you execute the passing action.



*Forearm relatively parallel to the floor (photos 2 & 4)*



*The above photos graphically illustrate how easy it is to parry a stab. Seeing that the direction of force is forward it is a simple matter to nudge it off to the side as a defense. Far too often practitioners will use the same amount of force to parry a stab as they will to block an incoming strike. This much force against a stab will create an over blocked position for you and leave you open for counters or follow ups.*



Parrying stabs continued.



*You'll notice that my cane arm is close to my body when parrying stabs. This is crucial to not going out of position.*

In executing a palusut action against a straight on strike (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, & 9) one meets the strike head on as in a regular force-to-force block. On impact is where you apply the redirecting action.



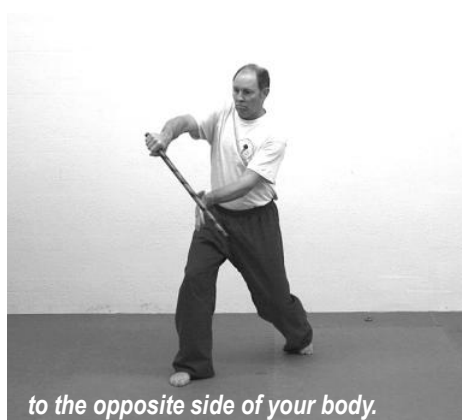
*Take the impact on your cane.*



*Slap down with your check hand*



*Move cane and check hand in unison...*



*to the opposite side of your body.*





Palusut with a partner.



*Palusut against a forehand strike.*



*I block and my check hand slaps down...*



*to begin the downward swing of the cane.*



*Using both hands I move the cane to...*



*the other side of my body.*



*Palusut against a backhand strike.*



*I block and my check hand slaps down...*



*to begin the downward swing of the cane.*



*Using both hands I move the cane to...*



*the other side of my body.*



## Recoil Options

A common habit I find in FMA practitioners is circular slash defense. This is when you cut through as a defense to your opponent's strike. There is nothing wrong with this but there is everything wrong with a continual habit.



*Slashing against a #1 strike.*



*Slashing against a #2 strike.*



I use a three option recoil set up. This recoil set up can be used for your striking as well as your blocking. It is very simple. When I recoil off a block or strike, there are three places I can go:

- Same shoulder
- Cross shoulder
- Cross body



*Same shoulder recoil*

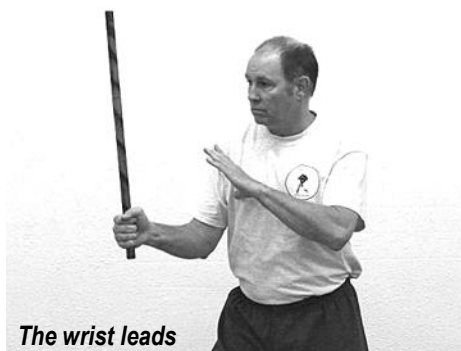


*Cross shoulder recoil*



*Cross body recoil*

## Recoil Options



Notice that when I do these recoil methods they are all wrist oriented. I am not cutting through with the arm but impacting with the cane and then using the wrist to begin the recoil action. It is impact – wrist bend – elbow bend. This makes for a far quicker recoil of your cane. I learned this type of recoil from Manong Ted Buot.

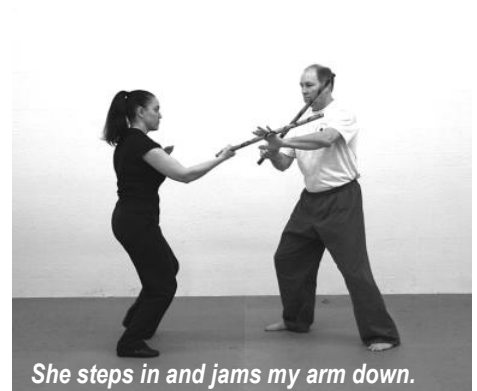
One prime reason I use this recoil option set up is it reduces the possibility of over committing on a block. A slashing block exposes your elbow to your opponent's check hand. Your opponent can offset your body.



When you do a wrist oriented recoil to your cross side, your elbow isn't pointing forward at your opponent. This makes their control of your cane arm impossible.



Wrist oriented recoil continued.





Another reason I use this type of recoil is that it ensures you don't over commit on your block and go out of alignment with your opponent. I try not to give my opponent access to my cane arm elbow so as to offset me. This is almost a pre-emptive counter the counter move. By the time my students have mastered how to recoil off of the block (or recoil their strike off of their opponent's block), they have also gotten a good grip on using their body action to deliver their strike with power. The three recoil options will teach a student to not load up on their strike and this means sharper striking and crisper timing.

Example of using the wrist recoil instead of loading up for your counter strike.



You'll notice in the following photo illustrations how much the chapter on body integration plays into this. When you recoil your strike in this fashion you are set up to fire back using your entire body as one functioning unit.

Example of using the wrist recoil instead of loading up for your counter strike.



Example of using the wrist recoil instead of loading up for your counter strike continued.



One final drill to establish this method of recoiling the cane lies in the Fast Track Arnis Training Program number two. This is a training program I devised for people who want to train in mid-range and close quarters stick work. In this drill you learn to use your wrist recoil method to lure your partner into blocking your strike and then aborting your strike for one coming from a different angle. It is a four strike pattern (1, 4, 12, 9) which, once learned and drilled, can be used with any combination of strikes to good effect. You can refer to the accompanying DVD set for the complete sequence in motion.



The key points to this drill are to recoil your cane just prior to your partner impacting it with their block and to use your check hand to clear the path for your follow up strike. Continued on next page.

Fast Track Arnis Training Program #2 drill continued.



## MA-80 Dueling & Combat Training

There are two aspects to the use of sparring in MA-80. One is for dueling or one-on-one fighting. This is akin to an American boxing match where you face off with your opponent. Combat is for all out fighting. I use sparring for both dueling and combat purposes and I go very simple when I do. One thing I do, however, is use offensive and defensive approaches gained from my karate competition days to train my cane sparring skills. These are fully delineated in my book, *American Freestyle Karate: A Guide To Sparring*. To briefly go over them, they are:

### Offensive Approaches

1. Direct Attack
2. Indirect Attack
3. Attack By Combination
4. Attack By Trapping
5. Attack By Drawing

### Defensive Approaches

1. Hit As Your Opponent Changes
2. Hit As The Ranges Cross
3. Hold Your Position and Hit
4. Simultaneous Block and Hit
5. Block and Hit
6. Evade and Hit
7. Evade

There is a definition and drill for each approach. *Direct Attack* is where you pick out a target and go for it without any preliminary actions or set ups. Note: I demonstrate these from the critical distance line as defined in the chapter on distancing. I do not believe in getting too close to my opponent and then doing nothing. This will get you hit fast.





*Indirect Attack* is the use of any kind of attention draw or distraction to set your opponent up for the real strike.



*Attack By Combination* is two or more attacks, each intending to hit.



*Attack By Trapping*, in cane fighting, is more of a follow up than an initial move. Here is where you strike in such a fashion to take advantage of your opponent blocking too far away from his body, capture his cane or cane arm and then follow up with your attack.



*Attack By Drawing* is where you leave a target open to draw your opponent into striking at that spot. When they do you take away the target and counter strike to the opening they leave for you.



**Defensive Approaches - Hit As Your Opponent Changes** is an aggressive defense action. This is where you use your opponent's change in position as your trigger for an attack. I put this in the defensive category as you are responding to your opponent's action rather than setting up the action yourself. You can use this as an offensive timing option as well.



*I watch my partner for her movement.*



*She drops her elbow and I attack.*



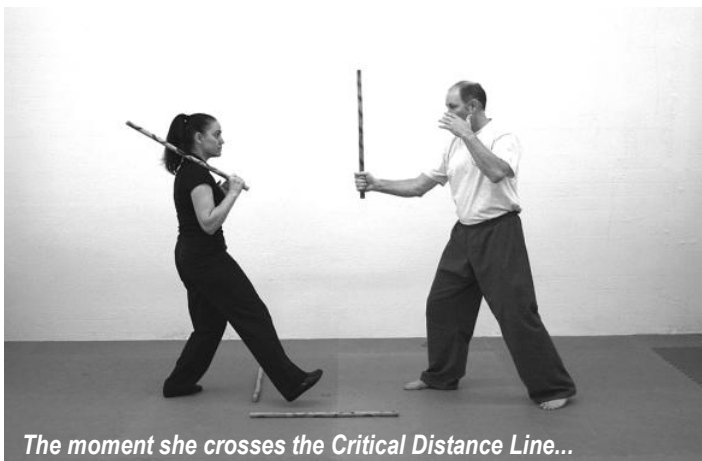
**Hit As The Ranges Cross** is where you and your opponent are out of striking range. As your opponent comes forward (without having struck at you yet ) and crosses into striking range, you hit.



*Critical Distance Line. We are out of effective hitting range.*



*She steps in to get closer before launching her attack.*



*The moment she crosses the Critical Distance Line...*



*is my signal to attack.*

*Hold Your Position And Hit* is where, as your opponent comes forward, you stay in the spot you are in and counter attack.



*Simultaneous Block And Hit* is using both limbs to execute your defense and counter attack in the same motion. This is easier done in the middle and close ranges.



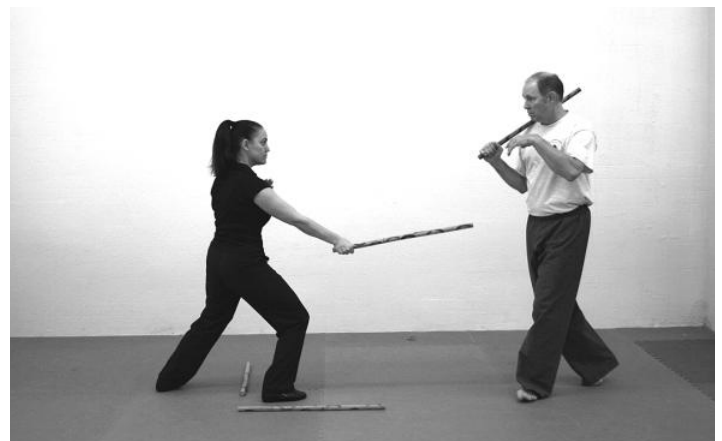


*Block And Hit* is blocking your opponent and countering back in a 1-2 motion. This has been demonstrated all throughout the book. The example on page 278 is good for showing the flow of action in the Block And Hit.

*Evade And Hit* is where you step or maneuver your body out of the way of your opponent's strike and counter strike them.



*Evade* is just getting out of the way of your opponent's strike with no counter blow.



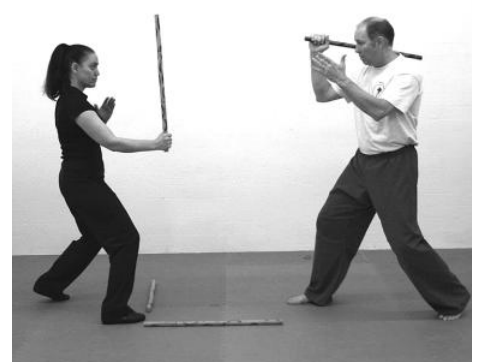
Much of what one I learned in Modern Arnis are what I call cane manipulations. A good example is disarming your opponent. Disarms are usually taught in what I call a 'clean' fashion. Your partner strikes. You block and disarm him while he stands there for you. This is fine for learning the technique yet will not teach you how to apply it in a hot and fast fight. There is nothing wrong in learning manipulations, whether cane or empty hand (locks & throws). Manipulations will develop attributes. This is very important. One needs to develop attributes such as timing, distance appreciation, leveraging, et al. The thing to remember is that combat is very fast and fluid and is not very forgiving of mistakes.

Combat must be kept very simple and options should be presented rather than looked for. Using the same example of disarming your opponent, one should not try to disarm your opponent as he attacks you. If the disarm presents itself, fine. Do it. You should not chase after the disarm, however, as you could get struck and injured if you fail. A clean disarm will help you develop leveraging. A clean disarm rarely ever presents itself, though. Take what you are given and work with that and you will be much safer.

I have two very simple strategies when I train stick sparring. One I call 'combat and destroy'. The other is 'play and subdue'. Combat and destroy is for all-out fighting.

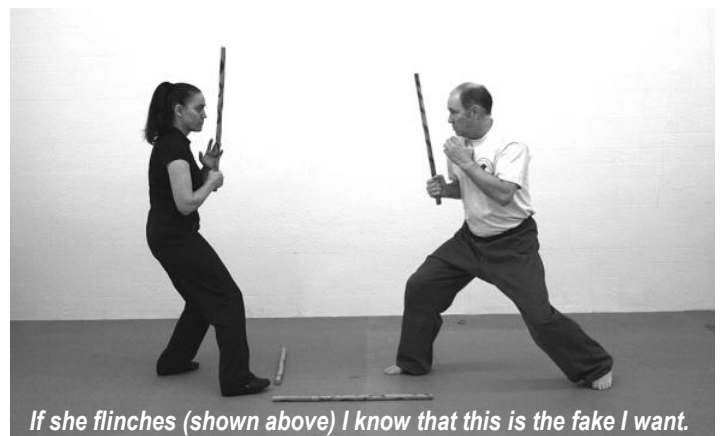
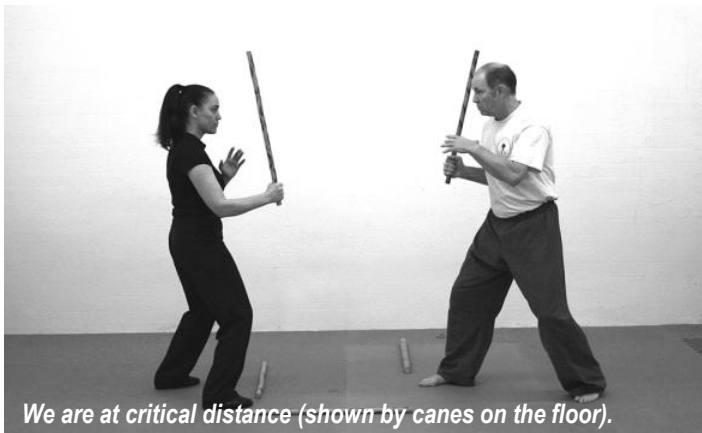
The first thing I do is set my range if I can. I like to stand in largo range, just outside of my opponent's strike capabilities.

The next point is I adopt using the vertical line for my striking. This is akin to what Guro Raffy Pambuan or Guro Roger Agbulos use. We all approach the vertical line differently but this is a common point between all of us. GM Remy, when asked by Fred King what he would use in a real fight, demonstrated the same concept in a technique he called 'up and down.'



When sparring someone I don't know I'll use a tactic from my old karate days. I'll test my opponent to see what he responds to. I find people will usually react to one of three things. They'll either react to commitment, range crossing or a technique. So I will test my opponent in exactly that order. An experienced opponent will either react to commitment or a range cross, when the critical distance line is breached. A less experienced opponent will react to an actual technique. What I will do is to fake a commitment, fake a range cross and then fake a technique and see what he responds to. If he responds to the first one I don't test the other two. No need to. I've found out what he works off of. If he doesn't respond to the first one I'll try the second one. If not that one then I'll try the third one, the technique fake. When I fake a technique I'll first check to see if he operates by 'leading centers' (watching my hips or shoulders) or if he looks for the actual technique itself. Stay aware of your opponent as their response might be a strike instead of a flinch or defensive move.

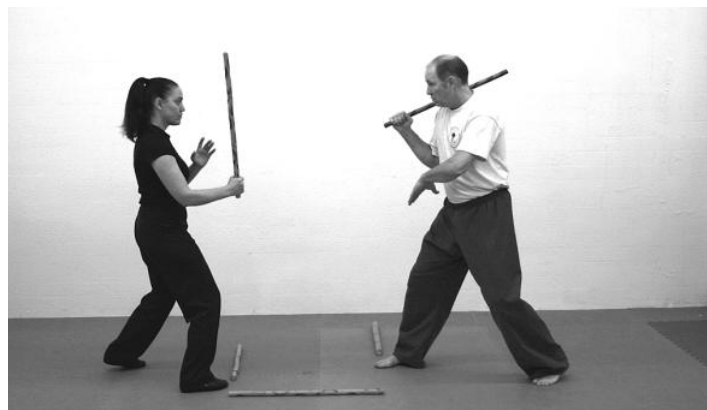
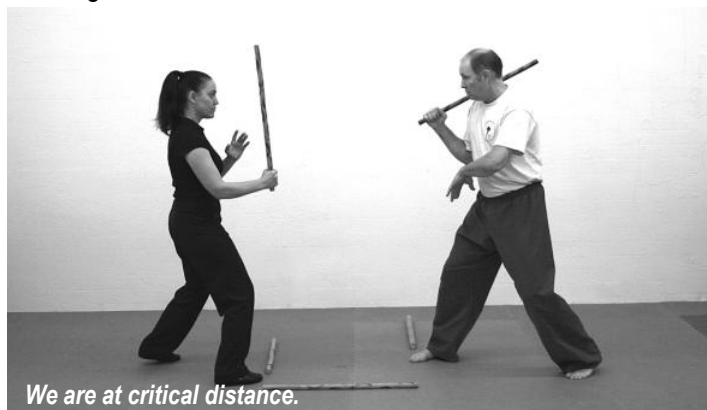
#### Commitment Fake



## Range Crossing Fake



## Leading Center Fake



Technique Fake





The most important point of my sparring is that I treat it like an actual duel where injury can occur. I do not play at it like American karate point competition. I do not go for 'tag at any cost'. I play it like a real fight. I will use padded canes and no protective equipment. I go for bony target areas, targets where bones will shatter upon impact. I don't go for the 'dive to hit the legs before I get hit in the head' approach. This is unrealistic for an impact weapon. And I respect when I get hit. This develops respect for the weapon as well as respect for my partner/opponent. I try to operate at largo range but if my opponent 'crashes the barrier' this is where all the different counter-the-counter and flow drills, all the manipulations come into play.

'Play and subdue' is far harder to do. This is where my object is to neutralize and control rather than destroy my opponent. Here is where all my flow drills, sensitivity drills, disarms, angling – every skill the preceding chapters develop come into play. To be able to do this is my personal overall goal. This is what my instructors could do to me. If they could develop it then so can I. And so can you.

One can create many drills from the preceding information and I leave it up to you to develop where you can use the techniques illustrated in this book. Some will work beautifully and others will be drill techniques only. As each fighter is different in attitude, aptitude and approach it is up to you to find out what will work for you.

## **Books & DVDs by Prof. Dan Anderson**

*available through [www.danandersonkarate.com](http://www.danandersonkarate.com)*

### **Filipino Martial Arts Books**

De-Fanging The Snake - A Guide To Modern Arnis Disarms  
Advanced Modern Arnis - A Road To Mastery  
Mano Y Mano - The Weaponless Fighting Techniques Of Modern Arnis  
Trankada - The Joint Locking Techniques & Tapi-Tapi Of Modern Arnis  
Modern Arnis - The Book Of Basics  
Espada Y Daga - The Sword & Dagger Fighting Art

### **Filipino Martial Arts DVDs**

Fast Track Arnis Training Program volume 1 - Basic Program  
Fast Track Arnis Training Program volume 2 - Close Quarters  
Fast Track Arnis Training Program volume 3 - Kids Program  
Fast Track Arnis Training Program volume 4 - Empty Hand Tactical Forms  
Introduction To Espada Y Daga  
Modern Arnis 80 International Seminars - The Philippines & United Kingdom  
The Key Combat Principles of Filipino Martial Arts  
The 1st Annual Presas Brothers Arnis Seminar  
The 2nd Annual Presas Brothers Arnis Seminar  
The 'Big If' - Self Defense Against A Knife Seminar  
Stick & Steel West Coast Seminar 2008  
Stick & Steel - Blade & Cane Applications of Modern Arnis (2 DVDs)  
2005 Portland Edged/Impact Weapons Seminar (4 DVDs)

### **Karate Books**

American Freestyle Karate: A Guide To Sparring  
Fighting Tactics & Strategies - World Championship Winning Moves  
Beyond Kick & Punch - The Complete Fighting Principles of American Freestyle Karate  
The Anatomy Of Motion - Combat Analysis of Traditional Karate Kata  
The American Freestyle Karate Black Belt Manual

### **Karate DVDs**

Positional Set Up - How To Read Your Opponent  
Motion Application Bunkai - Naihanchi Shodan  
Point! & Match! - World Championship Winning Moves (2 DVDs)  
The White through Black Belt American Freestyle Karate Curriculum (11 DVD set)